

The Discourse on The Great Parinirvana

D 16

Chapter 1

(First Recital, *paṭhama bhāṇavāra*)

1 [72] Thus have I heard :

1.1 At one time the Blessed One was staying on Mount Vulture Peak at Rājagaha.⁴²³

MAGADHA

Ajāta,sattu

1.1.1 Now at that time,⁴²⁴ the rajah Ajāta,sattu Vedehi,putta⁴²⁵ of Magadha,⁴²⁶ wished to wage war against the Vajjīs.⁴²⁷ He said thus:

“These Vajjīs, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!”⁴²⁸

1.2 Then, the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha addressed the brahmin Vassa,kāra, chief minister of Magadha,⁴²⁹ thus:

⁴²³ Mahā,parinibbāna S opens with the Buddha staying on Mt Vulture’s Peak (Gijjha,kūṭa/Gr̥dhra,kūṭa) at **Rāja,grha**, the capital of Magadha and one of the six main cities of India (D 2:147). It has been identified as modern Rajgir in the Nalanda district of Bihar about 21 km (13 miles) southwest of Bihar-Sarif. Its southern flank is protected by five hills: Vebhāra (Vaibhāra), Vepulla (Vaipulya), Isigili (R̥ṣi,giri), Paṇḍava (Pāṇḍava) and Gijjha,kūṭa (Gr̥dhra,kūṭa). As evident from **Go-paka Moggallāna S** (M 108), it is probable that king Ajātasattu was fortifying Rājagaha around this time (or earlier) because he is worried that king Caṇḍa Pajjota of Avantī might attack him (M 108.2/3:7). The sutta Comy says Ajātasattu, knew that Pajjota was Bimbisāra’s good friend and was worried that Pajjota might avenge Bimbisāra’s death at his hands by attacking him (MA 4:71). On the middle country and the 16 great states, see Intro (16.1). On this following episode, see M Pye, *The Buddha*, 1979:63-71 (ch 7).

⁴²⁴ This would probably be about a year before the Buddha’s parinirvana.

⁴²⁵ **Vedehi,putta** (Skt Vaidehī,putra, Avdś 1.57.2 ff). Ajāta,sattu (Skt Ajāta,śatru) (r 494-461) was called *Vaidehi,putra* because his mother was from Videha, whose capital was Mithilā. But Buddhaghosa explains that *Vedehi* here refers to a “wise woman” and not the “Videha lady,” since his mother is the daughter, not of a Videha king, but a Kosala king (J 3:121, 4:342). The Jātakas know her as Kosala,devī, the daughter of Mahā Kośala and sister of Pasenadi (Skt Prasenajit) (J 2:273, 403, 3:121 f). For details, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2), SD 8.10 (4).

⁴²⁶ Magadha was separated from Aṅga by the Campā river, and its territory extended westward to the Son river, corresponding approximately to the present Patnā and Gayā districts of South Bihar. See Finegan 1989:85-90.

⁴²⁷ Ajātasattu, having come into power, decides to conquer the Licchavīs of Vesālī/Vaiśālī and the Vajjī/Vṛjī confederacy (especially the Licchavīs of Vaiśālī and the Mallas of Kusinārā/Kusinagarī and Pāvā/Pāpā). Before embarking on his venture, Ajāta,sattu wishes to know what outcome the Buddha would foresee. Consequently, he despatches his chief minister, the brahmin Vassakāra/Varṣakāra, to consult the Buddha. On the political condition of India at that time, see Intro (16.2).

⁴²⁸ **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20/4:17-21) relates how Ajāta,sattu applies his cunning through his chief minister, Vassa,kāra, who pretends that he has barely escaped with his life from Ajāta,sattu. Having been given refuge and hospitality at Vesālī, Vassa,kāra lived there for 3 years, secretly sowing dissension amongst the Vajjīs. However, it was only after 16 years that the Vajjīs finally fell under his sway. Since then, the most important Vajjī tribe, **the Licchavīs**, remained subdued for many centuries until the 4th century CE, when they would regain their power under the Imperial Guptas, with Candragupta I marrying Kumāra,devī, a daughter of the Licchavīs and becoming the mother of Samudragupta (DA 99; JASB 17 1921:269-271). For details, see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples* (2004) ch 8 “The Thundering Silence” §9b.

⁴²⁹ **Vassa,kāra**, often paired with Sunīdha: see §1.26. “Chief minister,” *mahāmatta* (cf Skt *mahā,mātra*) = *mahā āmacca*? PED: “A king’s chief minister [evidently more than one of them]: he is the prime minister ‘who was the highest Officer-of-State and real Head of the Executive’ (Banerjea, *Public Administration in Ancient India*, 1916). His position is of such importance, that he even ranges as a **rājā** or king: V 3:47 (*rājā...akkhadassā mahāmattā ye vā pana chejjabhejjaṃ anusāsanti ete rājāno nāma*). — Note. An acc sg *mahā-mattānam* we find at A 1:154 (formed after the prec *rājānam*). See V 1:74 (where 2 ranks of *mahāmatta* are given: *senā-nāyaka* ~a the minister of defence, and *vohārika* ~a those of law); also D 1:7, 3:88, 3:64 (here with ep *khattiya*): A 1:154, 252, 279, 3:128; V 4:224; Vism 1:21; VbhA 312 (in simile of 2 ~ā), 340;

“Brahmin, go to the Blessed One and bow your head at the Blessed One’s feet on my behalf, and ask after his health, that he has good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort;⁴³⁰ saying thus:

‘Bhante, the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort.’ Then say: ‘The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjīs. He says thus: “These Vajjīs, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss [73] and misfortune!”’

And whatever the Blessed One should answer you, bear it well in mind and report to me—for the Tathāgata [Thus Come] does not speak falsely.”

1.3 “Yes, sire,” the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, replied to the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha.

Then, having ordered a number of magnificent state carriages, he mounted one of them, and leaving Rājagaha, headed for Mount Vulture Peak.

He went in his carriage as far as the ground would permit, dismounted and went up to the Blessed One, and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama,⁴³¹ the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, bows his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and asks after your health, that you have good health, mental ease, vigour, strength and comfort, and the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, desires to wage war against the Vajjīs. He says thus: ‘These Vajjīs, powerful and glorious as they may be, I shall uproot them, I shall destroy them, I shall bring upon them loss and misfortune!’”

The 7 conditions for a nation’s welfare⁴³²

1.4 At that time, the venerable Ānanda was standing behind the Blessed One, fanning him.⁴³³ Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda thus:

(1) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs gather regularly and that their gatherings [assemblies] are well attended?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs gather regularly and that their gatherings are well attended.”

PvA 169. Cf Fick, *Sociale Gliederung* 92, 99, 101.” See also VA 2:294, 5:1095; DA 2:540. Below, Vassakāra is mentioned with Sunīdha [1.26]. For details, see SD 45.6 (2.1). On Vassa,kāra’s destiny, see SD 33.5 (1.2.4).

⁴³⁰ *App’ābādham app’ātākaṃ lahu-ṭ, thānam balaṃ phāsu, vihāram...puccha*, lit “ask (if) he is free from sickness, free from illness, in a state of lightness, having strength, dwelling in comfort.” This is stock: D 1 204, 2:72; M 2:91, 108, 125, 141.

⁴³¹ Note that **Vassa,kāra** addresses the Buddha as *bho Gotama*, in a manner different from Ajātasattu’s instruction (where *bhante* is used). Evidently, **Vassa,kāra** shows only nominal respect to the Buddha. See §1.29n. The Majjhima Comy (to the Gopaka Moggallāna S, M 108) has a curious story about Vassakāra: once, seeing Mahā Kaccāna descending Mt Vulture Peak, he remarks that Mahā Kaccāna looked just like a monkey. Hearing this, the Buddha remarks that unless Vassakāra asks for the elder’s forgiveness, he would be born as a monkey in Veḷu,vana. Vassa,kāra, fearing the Buddha’s prophecy coming true, had various fruit trees and other trees planted in Veḷu,vana, to be of use to him as a monkey. After his death, he was actually reborn as a monkey who answered to the name Vassa,kāra! (MA 4:73)

⁴³² The traditional texts (such as the CSCD) call this section *rāja aparahāniya,dhammā*, “the king’s conditions for non-decline.” See Intro (10.1) above.

⁴³³ The Pali Canon records are at least six instances of a monk fanning the Buddha: (1) Nāga,samāla (**Mahā Sīhanāda S**, M 12.64/1:83); (2) Sāriputta (**Dīgha,nakha S**, M 74.14/ 1:501 f); (3) Ānanda (2 instances): **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,-1.4/2:73) & **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20.2/4:18); (4) Upavāṇa (2 instances): **Pāsādika S** (D 29) mentions Upavāṇa fanning the Buddha, ie, just after the Buddha has given Cunda Samaṇ’uddesa an instruction on the 4 satipatthanas (D 29,41/3:141), which is probably on a different occasion from the instance reported in **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,5.4/2:138), when again he fans the dying Buddha. Comy says that although the Buddha is fanned, he feels neither warm nor cold (AA 4:14). Analayo notes that while the Majjhima rarely mention a monk fanning the Buddha, the Madhyama Āgama (in Chinese tr) regularly depicts the Buddha being fanned, eg MĀ 33 = T1.474a19 || M 106; MĀ 204 = T1.775c17 || M 26; MĀ 205 = T1.779a10 || M 64; MĀ 212 = T1.793a1 || M 90; MĀ 213 = T.1.797b19 || M 89 (2005:54 n83). Cf Thich Minh Chau, *The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya*, 1991:30.

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“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather regularly and that their gatherings are well attended, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(2) What now, Ānanda, [74] have you heard that the Vajjīs assemble in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and conduct the Vajjī duties⁴³⁴ in fellowship?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and do the Vajjī duties in fellowship.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and do the Vajjī duties in fellowship, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(3) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the ancient Vajjī Dharma?”⁴³⁵

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the ancient Vajjī Dharma.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the ancient Vajjī Dharma, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(4) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī elders and consider it worthwhile to listen to them, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(5) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs do not forcibly abduct women and maidens of family, compelling them [the women] to live with them, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(6) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī shrines, both those within the city and outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly?” [75]

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī shrines, both those within the city and outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs honour, respect, esteem and venerate the Vajjī shrines, both those within the city and outside it, and do not neglect the due offerings as were given and made to them formerly, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

(7) “What now, Ānanda, have you heard that the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) would come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort?”

“Bhante, I have heard that the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort.”

“Ānanda, so long as the Vajjīs duly protect and shelter the arhats [worthy ones] so that they who have not yet come (to the Vajjī country) will come, and that they who have come will dwell in comfort, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

Teaching at Sārandada shrine

1.5 Then the Blessed One addressed the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha:

“Once, brahmin, when I was staying at the Sārandada shrine,⁴³⁶ I taught the Vajjīs these **seven conditions for non-decline**.⁴³⁷ Brahmin, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the Vajjīs, their growth is to be expected, not their decline.”

⁴³⁴ “Vajjī duties,” *Vajjī, karaṇīyā*, lit “that which should be done by the Vajjīs,” ie their affairs of state and their civil and common duties.

⁴³⁵ “Vajjī Dharma,” *Vajjī, dhammo*, or “the Vajjī code,” eg a criminal (such as a thief) is not summarily judged, but goes through stages of adjudication, until he is found guilty beyond reasonable doubt (DA 2:519).

When the Blessed One has said that, the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, if the Vajjī were accomplished in even just one of these conditions for non-decline, their growth is to be expected, not [76] their decline, what to say of 7 conditions of non-decline! Master Gotama, there is no way that the Vajjī can be overcome by any war of the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, other than by loss and misfortune, other than by internal discord.”⁴³⁸

Well, then, master Gotama, I now take leave. Many are my duties, many my responsibilities.”

“Please, brahmin, do as you deem fit here.”⁴³⁹

Then the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, joyfully approving of the Blessed One’s words, rose from his seat, and left.⁴⁴⁰

CONDITIONS FOR NON-DECLINE OF THE ORDER

Saṅgha aparahāṇiya, dhammā

Rājagaha monks assembled

1.6 Then, not long after the brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha, had left, the Blessed One addressed Ānanda:

⁴³⁶ **Sārandada Shrine** (*sārandada cetiya*) was dedicated to the yaksha Sārandada (D 2:75, 102; U 6.1/62; DA 2:523; AA 4:9; UA 323; cf A 3:167, 4:16). See also §3. In on shrines.

⁴³⁷ *Aparihāṇiya, dhammā*. This teaching is also found in **Sārandada S** (A 7.19/4:16 f). The following **Vassakāra S** (A 7.20/4:17-21) records how Ajātasattu sends Vassakāra into Vajjī country as a saboteur [1. In]. It should be noted here that the Buddha’s remark here obliquely refers to his compassion towards the Vajjīs, and hence tacitly admonishing that they should not be harmed.

In **Kaliṅgara S** (S 20.8), the Buddha speaks of the strengths and weaknesses of the Licchavīs, hinting at their eventual conquest by Ajātasattu, and warns the monks of their own future:

Bhikshus, now the Licchavīs dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in **exercise** (*up-āsana*). The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the Licchavīs will become delicate, with soft and tender hands and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. *Then Ajātasattu will find their weakness and have a hold on them.*

Bhikshus, now the monks dwell using blocks of wood as pillows. They are diligent and ardent in striving. Māra the Bad One cannot find their weakness nor have a hold on them. But in the future, the monks will become delicate, with soft and tender hand and feet; they will sleep on soft beds with pillows of cotton until sunrise. *Then Māra will find their weakness and have a hold on them.*

Therefore, bhikshus, you should train yourselves thus: “Using blocks of wood as cushions, we will dwell diligent and ardent in striving.” Thus you should train yourselves. (S 20.8/2:267 f)

⁴³⁸ “Internal discord,” *mithu, bheda*, **Vassakāra** is thinking of sowing disunity amongst the Vajjīs through sabotage. The Dīgha Comy relates how Vassakāra later conspires with Ajātasattu, who feigns to expel him from his kingdom on the charge that he favours the Vajjīs in the assembly. Welcomed by the unsuspecting Licchavīs, Vassakāra is appointed teacher to their children. Through his cunning, he caused the children to quarrel amongst themselves, and the conflict later spread amongst the elders. In three years, the Licchavīs were completely disunited so that Ajātasattu overran their land without resistance (DA 522 f). See prev n.

⁴³⁹ *Yassa dāni tvam brāhmaṇa kālaṃ maññasī ti*, lit “Please do what you think it is now the time to do.” This is stock: **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.103/1:85 @ SD 8.10); **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.6/2:104 @ SD 13), **Sekha S** (M 53.3/1:354 @ SD 21.14), **Kaṇṇaka-tthala S** (M 90.17/2:132 f @ SD 10.8); **Puṇṇ’ovāda S** (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31 @ SD 20.15), **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183,15, 30), **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379,29), **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17) & **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993:27-43.

⁴⁴⁰ Here again we see Vassakāra’s aloofness towards the Buddha as contrasted against how Ajātasattu himself takes leave of the Buddha in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2): “The rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha, joyfully approving of the Blessed One’s words, rose from his seat, bowed down to him, and, *keeping the Buddha to his right*, departed.” (D 1:85/2.101).

“Ānanda, go to all the monks⁴⁴¹ living in dependence of Rājagaha and have all of them to gather in the assembly hall.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda answered the Blessed One. Then he went to all the monks living in dependence of Rājagaha, and having gathered them all in the assembly hall, went to the Blessed One and said this:

“Bhante, the order of monks is assembled. Now is the time for the Blessed One to do as he thinks fit.”

The 7 conditions for non-decline (1)

1.6.2 Then the Blessed One rose from his seat and went to the assembly hall and sat down on the prepared seat. Thus seated down, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, I will teach you **the 7 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁴² Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as the monks gather regularly and often, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) Bhikshus, so long as the monks gather in fellowship, disperse [adjourn] in fellowship and [77] do the Sangha duties in fellowship, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as the monks do not authorize what has not been authorized, and do not abolish what has been authorized, but conduct themselves in accordance with the promulgated training-rules, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as the monks honour, respect, esteem and venerate the elder monks, those long-standing, long gone forth, sangha elders, sangha leaders, and consider it worthwhile to listen to them, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(5) Bhikshus, so long as the monks do not fall under the power of craving that arises in them, that leads to continued births, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) Bhikshus, so long as the monks love to dwell in the forest,⁴⁴³ then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(7) Bhikshus, so long as the monks keep themselves up in mindfulness, so companions in the holy life of virtuous conduct who have not yet come will come (to meet them), and that they who have come will dwell in comfort, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, monks, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (2)

1.7 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) **7 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁴⁴ Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in works [things to do], **[78]** do not find pleasure in works, are not caught up with delight in works,⁴⁴⁵ then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

⁴⁴¹ It is interesting to note that here only the “monks” are addressed but not the nuns who by this time number considerably: see §3.8 f below where all the 4 assemblies are mentioned. Either “monks” here is used inclusively for “monks and nuns” or no nuns followed the Buddha on his final journey. It is possible that the texts were edited later (after the Buddha’s passing) to tone down the references to nuns due to external social pressures (where the position of women were lower). A study of the social conditions of India after the Buddha and how they affected the monastics would yield interesting results.

⁴⁴² This teaching is also found in (**Aparahāniya**) **Bhikkhu S** (A 7.21/4:21 f). On the conditions of non-decline for the Sangha, see **Intro (10.1)** above.

⁴⁴³ *Āraññakesu sen’āsanesu sāpekḥā*, lit “one who has a fondness for the dwellings in the forest.”

⁴⁴⁴ This teaching is also found in (**Aparihāniya**) **Kamma S** (A 7.22/4:22). Cf (**Parihāniya**) **Sekha S** (A 4.26/ 4:24 f).

⁴⁴⁵ *Na kamm’ārāmā bhavissanti na kamma, ratā na kamm’ārāmataṃ anuyuttā*. Comy glosses *kamma* here as *katatta, kamma*, “work that should be done,” “work duties” (DA 2:528). The meaning here is that a monk should not be caught up in worldly business and busyness so that they can devote themselves to spiritual development to the teaching

(2) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in talk, do not find pleasure in talk, are not caught up with delight in talk, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in sleep, do not find pleasure in sleep, are not caught up with delight in sleep, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in company, do not find pleasure in company, are not caught up with delight in company, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.⁴⁴⁶

(5) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not delight in bad desires, do not fall under the power of bad desires, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(6) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not become bad friends, bad companions, bad comrades,⁴⁴⁷ then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(7) Bhikshus, so long as monks do not stop short of any lesser attainments,⁴⁴⁸ then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (3)

1.8 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) **7 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁴⁹ Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks have faith [are faithful]...⁴⁵⁰

(2) ...have moral shame...

(3) ...have moral fear...

(4) ...are learned [have heard much]... **[79]**

(5) ...are those who exert themselves [are those who put forth effort in spiritual development]...

(6) ...are established in mindfulness...

(7) ...are wise, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

others the Dharma, or in the words of **Metta S**: “Having little busyness and living a simple life” (*appa,kicco ca sallahuka,vutti*) (Sn 144 = Kh 9.2).

⁴⁴⁶ In **Mahā Suññatā S** (M 122), the Buddha says that a monk who delights in company does not “shine” (*sobhati*) in his teaching (M 122.3/3:110), SD 11.

⁴⁴⁷ *Na pāpa,mittā bhavissanti na pāpa,sahāyā na pāpa,sampavāṅkā*. Of the modern English trs, apparently only Rhys Davids (D:RD 2:82) renders it correctly.

⁴⁴⁸ *Yāvakiṅvaṅ ca bhikkhave bhikkhū na oramattakena visesādhigamena antarā vosānaṅ āpajjissanti*, lit “Monks, so long as monks do not, on their quest for excellence, come to a stop with an insignificant measure...” In other words, a practitioner should not relent until awakening is attained. This statement relates directly to Ānanda’s spiritual status [§5.13]. Rhys Davids thinks this is an interesting analogue to Philippians 3:13 of the Bible.

⁴⁴⁹ This teaching is also found in (**Aparahāniya**) **Saddhiya S** (A 7.23/4:22 f).

⁴⁵⁰ Comy here (DA 2:529) mentions 4 kinds of faith:

(1) faith through attainment (*āgamanīya,saddhā*, other Comys: *āgamana,saddhā*), that is, the faith of the “omniscient” Bodhisattva [one bound to become a fully self-awakened one] by mastering it since his firm resolve (to become Buddha) (*sabbaññū,bodhisattānaṅ saddhā abhinīhāratō paṭṭhāya āgatattā*);

(2) faith through realization [understanding] (*adhigama,saddhā*), that is, the attainment of the noble saints through realization [understanding] (*ariya,sāvakaṅaṅ paṭivedhena adhigatattā*);

(3) faith by conviction (*okappana,saddhā*), that is, conviction by way of unshakability [unshakable faith] when it is said [when he hears the words], “Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha” (*Buddho dhammo saṅgho ti vutte acala,bhāvena okappanaṅ*);

(4) faith of calm joy [“confidence of trust” (Gethin 2001:115 n51)] (*pasāda,saddhā*), that is, the arising of calm and joyful faith (*pasād’uppatti*). (DA 2:529; MA 3:325 f = AA 3:257)

See **Pubba,koṭṭhaka S** (S 48.44/5:220-222), SD 10.7 (1).

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The 7 conditions for non-decline (4): the 7 limbs of awakening⁴⁵¹

1.9 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) **7 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁵² Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

- (1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of mindfulness, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (2) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of dharma-investigation, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (3) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of effort, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (4) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of zest, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (5) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of tranquillity, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (6) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of concentration, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (7) so long as monks will cultivate the awakening-factor of equanimity, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 7 conditions for non-decline (5): the 7 perceptions

1.10 Bhikshus, I will teach you another (set of) **7 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁵³ Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:⁴⁵⁴

- (1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will cultivate the perception of impermanence, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (2) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of not-self, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (3) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of the foul,⁴⁵⁵ bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (4) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of danger, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (5) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of letting go (of defilements),⁴⁵⁶ bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.
- (6) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of fading away (of lust),⁴⁵⁷ bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

⁴⁵¹ “Limbs of awakening,” *bojjhaṅga* or *sambojjhaṅga*.

⁴⁵² This teaching is also found in (**Aparahāniya**) **Bodhi S** (A 7.24/4:23).

⁴⁵³ This teaching is also found in (**Aparahāniya**) **Saññā S** (A 7.25/4:24).

⁴⁵⁴ Another set of 7 perceptions are given in (**Vitthāra**) **Saññā S 2** (A 7.46), where each of these meditations are explained in some detail: perception of impurity (*asubha,saññā*), perception of death (*marāṇa,saññā*), perception of repulsiveness of food (*āhāre paṭikkūla,saññā*), perception of disenchantment with the world (*sabba,loke anabhirata,saññā*), perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*), perception of unsatisfactoriness in impermanence (*anicce dukkha,saññā*), perception of impermanence (*anatta,saññā*) (A 7.46/4:46-53).

⁴⁵⁵ In the Suttas, *asubha,saññā* (perception of foulness) refers to the 31 parts of the body (32 according to Comy): head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin; flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys; heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs; mesentery, bowels, stomach, excrement[, brain (in the head)]; * bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat; tears, tallow, saliva, snot, synovial fluid, urine.’ [*32nd part: Kh 3, Pm 1:6 f; Vism 8.42-144/239-266.] The term *asubha,nimitta* (the sign of foulness) in Comys, refers to one or other of the 10 foul objects, ie a corpse in one of the 10 stages of decomposition (Vism 6.1-11/178 f).

⁴⁵⁶ MA says that there are 2 kinds of letting go or relinquishment (of suffering) (*vossagga*): “giving up” (*pariccāga*), ie the abandonment of defilements, and “entering into” (*pakkhandana*), ie culminating in nirvana.

⁴⁵⁷ *Virāga* also “fading away [of lust]” or “dispassion” (see §21).

(7) so long as monks will cultivate the perception of ending (of suffering),⁴⁵⁸
bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline. [80]

Bhikshus, so long as these 7 conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

The 6 conditions for non-decline (6): the 6 conditions of conciliation

1.11 Bhikshus, I will teach you **6 conditions for non-decline**.⁴⁵⁹ Listen, bhikshus, pay close attention to it, I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante!” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

(1) “Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of deed [bodily action] both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(2) Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of speech openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(3) Bhikshus, so long as monks will show lovingkindness to companions in the holy life by way of thought both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

(4) Bhikshus, so long as monks will mutually share⁴⁶⁰ with virtuous companions in the holy life whatever they receive rightfully, even⁴⁶¹ the contents of their alms-bowl, enjoying those gains without thinking of apportioning them [not thinking of dividing them in a biased manner],⁴⁶² then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.⁴⁶³

(5) Bhikshus, so long as monks will dwell compatibly accomplished in the moral virtue with the moral precepts untattered, not rent [without any hole], unmixed [not twisting the rules], spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, giving rise to concentration,⁴⁶⁴ and so too they dwell with their companions in the holy life, both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

⁴⁵⁸ That is, “cessation of suffering” (*nirodha*) (see §21).

⁴⁵⁹ *Cha aparihāṇiya dhamma*. These 6 conditions are also called “conditions of conciliation” (*sāraṇīya, dhammā*, D 3:245; A 6.11/3:288 f). These 6 qualities endear one to others and causes others to constantly recall (*sāraṇīya*) one with respect, joy and love. As such, they also conduce to social and communal harmony, solidarity and progress. See **Sama, jīvi S** (A 4.55), where those living the spiritual life are said to be compatible (*sama*) in faith (*saddhā*), moral virtue (*sīla*), charity (*cāga*), and wisdom (*paññā*) (A 4.55/2:61 f), SD 5.1 Intro. On *sāraṇīya*, see DPL 463.

⁴⁶⁰ “Mutually share,” *sādhāraṇa, bhogī*, lit “those who share commonly.”

⁴⁶¹ “Even,” *antamaso*.

⁴⁶² “Enjoying those gains without thinking of apportioning them,” *tathā, rūpehi lābhehi appaṭivibhatta, bhogī bhavissanti*. The word *appaṭivibhatta* tr as (1) not divided in a biased manner; (2) = *sādhāraṇa*, common, ie to be enjoyed in common. It is the opp of *paṭivibhatta*, “divided in a biased manner.”

⁴⁶³ *Yāvakkīvaṇ ca bhikkhave bhikkhū ye te lābhā dhammikā dhamma, laddhā antamaso patta, pariyāpanna, mattam pi tathā, rūpehi lābhehi appaṭivibhatta, bhogī bhavissanti silavantehi sa, brahmacārīhi sādhāraṇa, bhogī, vuddhi y’eva bhikkhave bhikkhunam pāṭikaṅkhā no parihāṇi*.

⁴⁶⁴ “Moral virtues unbroken, ... giving rise to concentration,” *sīlāni akhaṇḍāni acchiddāni asabalāni akammāsāni bhujisāni viññūpasatṭhāni aparāmatṭhāni samādhi, samvattanakāni* (D 2:80, 3:245; M 1:322, 2:251; S 5:408; A 3:134, 3:289, 290; Pm 1:44; Nett 56). These are said to be “virtues dear to the noble ones,” *ariya, kantāni sīlāni* (S 5:364, 382, 386, 396, 408; A 3:36). The virtues of the noble one are explained at Vism 221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts; hence, these virtues are dear to them (SA 2:74). See UA 268. On the phrase, **akhaṇḍāni acchiddāni asabalāni akammāsāni** (“unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless”), DA (speaking of the seven groups of monastic offences, V 5:91) explains that when one commits the first or the last of them, one is said to be “**tattered**” (*khaṇḍa*), like one whose robe is torn all around at the edges; if he commits one of the middle offences, he “**rent**” [holed] (*chidda*) like one whose robe that is rent [with a hole] in its middle; if one commits two or three successive offences, one’s conduct is “**mottled**” (*sabala*), like a cow with red or black pigments, with a different colour rising upon its back or belly; or, if one transgresses now and then, one’s conduct is said to be “**blotchy**” (*kammāsa*), like a cow with coloured spots here and there. (DA 2:536)

Cf **Thāna S** (A 4.192), SD 14.12.

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(6) Bhikshus, so long as monks will dwell harmoniously with right view⁴⁶⁵ that leads to the noble liberation, concurring to the utter destruction of suffering, dwelling in such manner with their companions in the holy life both openly and in private, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline. [81]

Bhikshus, so long as these six conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.”

The 3 trainings

1.12 Then the Blessed One, while staying on Mount Vulture Peak at Rājagaha, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,⁴⁶⁶

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from **the mental influxes**, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”⁴⁶⁷

AMBA,LAṬṬHIKĀ

The rajah’s lodging, Ambalatthikā

1.13 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Rājagaha for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go⁴⁶⁸ to **Amba,laṭṭhikā**.”⁴⁶⁹

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Amba,laṭṭhikā.

⁴⁶⁵ “Harmoniously with right view,” *diṭṭhi,sāmañña,gatā*: on *sāmañña* as abstract n of *samāna*, “same, similar, equal, even” (Sn 18, 309; J 2:108). See (**Aṭṭhaka**) **Paññā S** (A 8.2,10.3), SD 44.13.

⁴⁶⁶ This stock summary repeats 8 times [1.12, 1.14, 1.18, 2.4, 2.10, 2.20, 4.4, 4.12], attesting to the importance of **the 3 trainings**. In **Cūḷa Vedalla S** (M 44), the nun Dhammadinnā explains to the layman Visākha that “the three aggregates [3 trainings] are not included in the noble eightfold path, friend Visākha, but the noble eightfold path is included in **the three aggregates**. Right speech, right action, and right livelihood states are included in the aggregate of moral virtue. Right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration states are included in the aggregate of concentration. Right view and right thought are included in the aggregate of wisdom” (M 44.11/1:301). Unlike in the term *pañca-k,khandha*, “aggregates” (*khandha*) here merely refers to a grouping without clinging. Mrs C A F Rhys Davids (*What was the original gospel of Buddhism?* 1938b: 60), noticing the “omission” of the noble eightfold path in the Aṭṭhaka Nipāta (Book of Eights) of the Aṅguttara Nikāya, conjectures that the noble eightfold path is a later (post-Buddha) teaching. Her conjecture has led other scholars like GC Pande (*Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, 1974:518) to hold a similar opinion. What we have here is an “academic problem” where truth is judged by the text rather than by insight, as in the case of the practitioner benefiting from the oral tradition of living Dharma teachers. The academic tradition, dry and professional as it is, helps to test the truth and worth of what is purported as Dharma—and yet the test of the dish is in one’s eating it! On the tension between the cold academic and the spiritual practitioner, see Sungtaek Cho, “The rationalist tendency in odern Buddhist scholarship: A reevaluation,” *Philosophy East and West* 52,4 Oct 2002:426-440. See **Intro (10.4)**.

⁴⁶⁷ *Iti sīlam itī samādhi itī paññā, sīla,paribhāvito samādhi maha-p,phalo hoti mahānisaṃso, samādhi,paribhāvita paññā maha-p,phalā hoti mahānisaṃsā, paññā,paribhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammad eva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathīdāṃ kām’āsavā bhav’āsavā diṭṭh’āsavā avijjāsavā ti.*

⁴⁶⁸ “Come, ... let us go,” *āyāma*, imp 1 pl of *āyāti*, meaning (1) “he comes, arrives, approach, reach, attain, return” (V 1:30; D 3:19; S 1:43); sometimes contextually = *gacchati*, “he goes” (SnA 2:480,16 ad Sn 669; *gacchāma*, SnA 2:463,7 ad Sn 116). The imp often means “he goes” rather than “he comes,” eg imp 1 pl *āyāma*, “come, let us go!” (V 3:10; **D 16** §1.13/-2:81, §1.15/2:81, §1.19/2:84, §2.1/2:90, §2.5/2:91, §4.5/2:123 (x4), §4.13/2:126, §4.38/2:134, §5.1/2:137). (2) “he gets into, passes into, falls into, meets with, becomes” (*yogaṃ āyanti maccuno*, S 46/1.20 /1:11,23; *kodho vo vasam ~ātu*, S 1:140,1*; *ākāsam indriyāni saṅkamati ~anti*, S 3:207,4). See **Khandha S** (S 22.48), SD 17.1 (5).

⁴⁶⁹ **Amba,laṭṭhikā**, Skt Āmra,yaṣṭikā (or Veṇu,yaṣṭika, Lamotte 1988a:22), was located halfway between Rājagaha and Nālandā, on the Buddha’s first lap of the northbound final journey. It was a royal park, surrounded by a rampart and the royal rest-house is adorned with paintings (DA 1:14). See foll n.

The 3 trainings

1.14 There the Blessed One stayed in the rajah's lodging (in the royal park)⁴⁷⁰ in Amba,laṭṭhikā.

Then the Blessed One, while staying in the rajah's lodging (in the royal park) in Amba,laṭṭhikā, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

NĀLANDĀ

Pāvārikā mango grove, Nālandā

1.15 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Amba,laṭṭhikā for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Nālandā.”⁴⁷¹

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Nālandā.

There the Blessed One stayed in the Pāvārikā mango grove at Nālandā.



Ruins of ancient Nālandā

Sāriputta's lion-roar

1.16⁴⁷² Then the venerable Sāriputta went up to the Blessed

⁴⁷⁰ “The rajah's lodging,” *rāj'āgāraka* a well-crafted building for his sport (DA 1:14). See prev n.

⁴⁷¹ **Nālandā**, located on the outskirts of Rājagṛha, has been identified by Cunningham on the basis of distances and directions given by the Chinese pilgrims and some image inscriptions discovered at the ruins of the village of Bargaon near the Nālandā railway station of the Bakhtiarpur-Bihar branch line of the Eastern railway. There is a high road that starts from Rājagṛha passing through Nālandā and goes up to Pāṭaligrāmaka (D 2:48). According to the Mahāvastu, Nālandā is the birthplace of Śāriputra (Mvst 2:56), who visits the Buddha there.

⁴⁷² The events of this section [§1.16] are greatly expanded in **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28) = (**Nālandā S**, S 47.12/ 5:159-161, but without the last para). This is **Sāriputta's** last meeting with the Buddha. Knowing that he will die in 7 days, he takes leave of the Buddha and visits his mother at Nāla,gāmaka (S 47.12/5:161), and passes away on the full moon day of Kattikā (Oct-Nov) (Tha 1158-1161; DA 2:549 f; SA 3:214-221; J 1:391). **Moggallāna**, his closest friend and the Buddha's left hand monk, passes away a fortnight later on the new moon day of Māgasira (Nov-Dec), 5 months before the Buddha. On assassins' attempts on Moggallāna's life, see J 522/5:125-127; DhA 10.7/3:65-71. Both Sāriputta and Moggallāna are older than the Buddha (DhA 1:73). The Buddha reminisces about the two chief disciples in **Ukkacelā S** (S 47.14/5:163-165): see §3.1n below.

Chronological problem: “The event related in this [**Cunda S**, S 47.13/5:161-163] poses a problem for the traditional chronology of the Buddha's life. In the Mahāparinibbāna S, Sāriputta's lion roar [**Nālandā S**, S 47.12] takes place during what appears to be the Buddha's final journey along the route from Rājagaha to Vesālī. From Vesālī the Buddha heads for Kusinārā without returning to Sāvattthī, some 200 km to the west. Yet the present sutta shows the Buddha residing at Sāvattthī when he receives the news of Sāriputta's death. To preserve the traditional chronology, the Comys (SA here & DA 2:550) have the Buddha make an additional side trip to Savattthī following his rains retreat at Beluva,gāmaka [D 16,2.21-26/2:98 f], an excursion not mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S. Sāriputta accompanies him on this trip to Sāvattthī, later <http://dharmafarer.org>

One, and having saluted him [82] sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Sāriputta said this to the Blessed One:

“It is thus clear to me [Such is my faith],⁴⁷³ bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awakening!”⁴⁷⁴

“Lofty indeed, are the words you utter, Sāriputta, and lordly as a bull, too! You are absolutely caught up in a lion-roar,⁴⁷⁵ saying, ‘It is clear to me [Such is my faith],⁴⁷⁶ bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awakening!’

Well now, Sāriputta, were you with the arhats [worthy ones] fully self-awakened ones of past times, so that with your mind you have grasped the minds of all the Blessed Ones thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed Ones, such is their nature, such is their wisdom, such is how they live, such is their liberation’?”⁴⁷⁷

“No, bhante.”

“Well then, Sāriputta, will you be with the arhats [worthy ones] fully self-awakened ones of future times, so that with your mind you will grasp the minds of all the Blessed Ones thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed Ones, such is their nature,⁴⁷⁸ such is their wisdom, such is how they live, such is their liberation’?”

“No, bhante.”

“Well then, Sāriputta, do you know me as the arhat [worthy one], fully self-awakened one, so that with your mind you have grasped my mind thus, ‘Such is the moral virtue of the Blessed One, such is his nature, such is his wisdom, such is how he lives, such is his liberation’?”

“No, bhante.”

“So then, Sāriputta, you do not have the knowledge of the minds of the arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones of the past, the future and the present! But then, Sāriputta, why do you utter lofty [83] and lordly words; why are you absolutely caught up in a lion-roar, saying, ‘It is clear to me [Such is my faith], bhante, that there never has been, there will never be, and there is now no other recluse or brahmin who is better or wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards self-awakening!’?”⁴⁷⁹

1.17 “No, bhante, I have no knowledge of the minds of the worthy fully self-awakened ones of the past, of the future or of the present. **But it is known through the drift of the Dharma.**⁴⁸⁰

takes his leave and returns to his native village Nālaka, gāma, where he falls ill and dies.” (S:B 1923 n157). All the Chin versions omit this conversation. This fact and that the Buddha had died earlier, shows that this episode must have been added later. On Sāriputta’s parinirvana, see Nyanaponika & Hecker, *Great Disciples of the Buddha*, 1997:47-59; also Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004:5.26. On Moggallāna’s parinirvana, see Nyanaponika & Hecker 1997:100-5; also Piya Tan 2004:5.35.

⁴⁷³ *Evam, pasanno.*

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. Prasenajit’s remarks about arhats, S 3.11/177-79 = Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, ch 8 “The Thundering Silence” §14.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ekamso gahito sīha, nādo nadito.*

⁴⁷⁶ “It is clear to me,” *evam passano.*

⁴⁷⁷ *Kin nu Sāriputta ye te ahesuṃ aññātam addhānam arahanto sammā, sambuddhā, sabbe te Bhagavanto cetasā ceto paricca veditā, evaṃ, sīlā te Bhagavanto ahesuṃ iti pi, evaṃ, dhammā evaṃ, paññā evaṃ, vihārī evaṃ, vimuttā te Bhagavanto ahesuṃ iti pi ti.*

⁴⁷⁸ “Such is their nature,” *evaṃ, dhammā.* D:W renders this as “such was their teaching,” which is problematic as obviously all the Buddhas teach the same Dharma, and as such Sāriputta would clearly then know this. Moreover, it is evident from the flow of ideas and context, that the Buddha is referring to the future Buddha’s spiritual qualities.

⁴⁷⁹ Nina van Gorkom makes a sobering note here: “How can we find out who is an ariyan [saint]? There is no way to know who is an ariyan, unless we have become enlightened ourselves. It cannot be known from someone’s outward appearance whether he is an ariyan or not. People who are very amiable and peaceful are not necessarily ariyans. However, we can take our refuge in the ariyan Sangha even if we do not personally know any ariyans. We can think of their virtues, no matter whether they are in this plane of existence or in other planes. The ariyans prove that there is a way to the end of defilements. We should know what the condition is for the end of defilements: the cultivation of wisdom. The monks, nuns, men and women layfollowers who were ariyans in the Buddha’s time proved that what the Buddha taught can be realized in daily life. The Buddha did not teach abstract ideas, he taught reality. Should those who want to realize the truth not walk the same Path they walked, even if they still have a long way to go?” (*Buddhism in Daily Life*, 1977:76)

<http://www.dhammadownload.com/outlook.html>

⁴⁸⁰ “The drift of the Dharma,” *dhamm’ anvaya* (D 2:83 = 3:100), ie by inference through the Dharma. CPD gives these meanings of *anvaya*: (1) series, lineage, succession; (2) successor, next, following; (3) ifc: following, descended from, dependent on; (4) (logical) connection, reasoning, inference, conclusion, consequence; (5) “positive concomitance.” I here

Parable of the frontier city⁴⁸¹

1.17.2 Bhante, it is just as if there were a royal frontier city with strong bastions and a strong encircling wall with an archway that has a single gateway, and a moat around it.

The gate-keeper there, clever, experienced and wise, keeps out strangers and lets in only those whom he knows. He patrols along the pathway all around the city so that he will see no cracks or cavities in the wall, even large enough for a cat to pass through.⁴⁸²

Even so, bhante, is the drift of the Dharma known to me.

Bhante, whatever arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones, there were of past times, all these Blessed Ones,

having overcome the 5 mental hindrances⁴⁸³ that are mental impurities that weaken wisdom, then placing their minds firmly in the four focuses of mindfulness,⁴⁸⁴ then cultivating the seven awakening-factors⁴⁸⁵ according to reality, attain to the peerless full self-awakening.⁴⁸⁶

The 3 trainings

1.18 Then the Blessed One, while staying in [84] the Pāvārikā mango grove at Nālandā gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental

follow the tr of PED 338b & Walshe, and guided by Comys which gloss *anvaya* as *anumāna* (inference) (DA 3:880, MA 3:352, SA 3:210). Sāriputta means that his lion-roar is based on his understanding and realization of the Dharma. This episode is expanded in **Sampasādanīya Sutta** (D 28).

⁴⁸¹ Recurs in **Nālandā S** (S 47.12,8), SD 12.18.

⁴⁸² Here, this parable at (**Dasaka**) **Uttiya S** (A 10.95), adds “Now, he might not have such a knowledge, ‘So many people has entered or left the city. But here knows this much, ‘Whichever large creatures that enter this city or leave it, all of them have to enter or leave by this gateway’ (SD 44.13). This is a beautiful parable for mental cultivation. Cf another “frontier city” parable for mental cultivation in **Kimsuka S** (S 35.245/4:194 f), SD 2.17 (8.4), where the Buddha explains the image-ries he uses. See also the very important **Nagara S** (S 12.65,19-21/2:105 f), SD 14.2.

⁴⁸³ **The 5 mental hindrances** (*pañca nīvaraṇā*) are: (1) sensual desire (*kāma-c, chanda*); (2) ill will (*vyāpāda*); (3) sloth and torpor (*thīna, middha*); (4) restlessness and worry (*uddhacca, kukkucca*); (5) persistent doubt (*vicikicchā*). See (**Nīvaraṇā**) **Saṅgāra S** (S 46.55/5:121-126).

⁴⁸⁴ **The focuses of mindfulness** (*satipaṭṭhāna*) are: (1) Contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), comprising 14 exercises: the 4 postures, full awareness, reflection on foulness, the 4 elements [§§12-13], and the 9 “corpse” meditations; (2) Contemplations of feelings (*vedanā nupassanā*), 1 exercise, considering feeling in terms of the affective quality—as either pleasant, painful or neutral—with each being examined again as being either carnal or spiritual; (3) Contemplation of the mind (or mind-consciousness) (*cittānupassanā*), 1 exercise, examining 16 states of mind coloured by their concomitants—**Pubba S** (S 51.11/5:263-266); (4) Contemplation of mind-objects (or “the nature of things”) (*dharmānupassanā*) [§§36-45] is the most diversified exercise involving these 5 schemes: the 5 hindrances, the 5 aggregates, the 6 sense-bases, the 7 awakening-factors, and the 4 noble truths. See **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22), **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), **Ānāpānasati S** (M 118) and **Mahā Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 62).

⁴⁸⁵ **The 7 awakening-factors** (*satta (sam)bojjhaṅga*) are: (1) awakening-factor of mindfulness (*sati sambojjhaṅga*); (2) awakening-factor of mental investigation (*dhamma, vicaya sambojjhaṅga*); (3) awakening-factor of effort (*virīya sambojjhaṅga*); (4) awakening-factor of zest (*pīti sambojjhaṅga*); (5) awakening-factor of tranquillity (*passaddhi sambojjhaṅga*); (6) awakening-factor of concentration (*samādhi sambojjhaṅga*); (7) awakening-factor of equanimity (*upekkhā sambojjhaṅga*) (D 3:251, 282; Vbh 277).

⁴⁸⁶ After a long intervening passage, **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28.21/3:116) and **Nālandā S** (S 47.12.10/5:161) close with the Buddha saying: “Therefore, Sāriputta, you should repeat this Dharma exposition frequently to the monks and the nuns, to the layman followers and the laywoman followers. Even though some foolish people may have doubt or uncertainty regarding the Tathagata, when they hear this Dharma exposition their doubt or uncertainty regarding the Tathagata will be abandoned.” The underscored passage refers to the comprehensive meditation practice leading to awakening: see **The Satipaṭṭhāna Ss**, SD 13.1(6b).

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influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

PĀṬALI,GĀMA

The lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma

1.19 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Nālandā for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Pāṭali,gāma**.”⁴⁸⁷

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Pāṭali,gāma.

1.20⁴⁸⁸ Now at Pāṭali,gāma, the lay followers said, “It is said that the Blessed One has arrived in Pāṭali,gāma!” Then the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma went to the Blessed One, and having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma said this to the Blessed One:

“May the Blessed One consent to stay at our rest-house!”

And the Blessed One consented by his silence.

1.21 Then, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma, knowing that the Blessed One had consented (to their invitation), rose from their seats, saluted the Blessed One and keeping their right side to him, departed. They went to the rest-house, fully prepared it for occupation, preparing the seats, setting up the water-pot, and filled the oil-lamp.

Then they went to the Blessed One, and having saluted him, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the rest-house is fully prepared for occupation: the seats are prepared, the water-pot set up, and the oil-lamp filled. Now is the time for the Blessed to do as he thinks fit.” [85]

1.22 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself, taking robe and bowl, went with the monks to the rest-house. After arriving, he washed his feet,⁴⁸⁹ and then sat down facing the east resting against⁴⁹⁰ the middle pillar.

The order of monks, too, having washed their feet, went in and sat down with their backs to the west wall, with the Blessed One before them.

The lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma, too, having washed their feet, sat down with their backs to the east wall facing the west, with the Blessed One before them.

Advantages of moral virtue⁴⁹¹

1.23 Then the Blessed One addressed the lay followers of Pāṭali,gāma:

Houselords, there are **these 5 disadvantages of being immoral**, of moral failing. What five?

(1) Here, houselords, the immoral, one of moral failing, suffers great loss of wealth through being heedless in managing his affairs. This is the first disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

(2) Furthermore, houselords, for the immoral, one of moral failing, a bad report of his reputation will spread about. This is the second disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

(3) Furthermore, houselords, for the immoral, one of moral failing, whatever assembly he goes to, whether of nobles [kshatriya], of priests [brahmins], of houselords or of recluses, he approaches without confidence, troubled. This is the third disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

⁴⁸⁷ **Pāṭali,gāma** (Skt Pāṭali,grāmaka), 100 km (62 miles) from Rājagṛha. This fortress would later become the capital of the Magadhan empire. Later on, it was called Puṣpa,pura or Kusuma,pura, and during Asoka’s time, Pāṭali,putra. It was located in the villages of Kumrahar, Bulandibagh, in the outskirts of modern Patna in Bihar, near the confluence of the Ganges and the Son (though the Son has now somewhat changed its course). Due to high water level and because the modern city is located over much of the ancient one, excavation of Pāṭaliputra has been limited. See Finegan 1989:90. See also Intro (7.3) above.

⁴⁸⁸ The foll §§ [1.20-34] are found in V 1:227 (elaborated), D 3:209, S 4:183, U 8.6.

⁴⁸⁹ “He washed his feet,” *pāde pakkhāletvā* (V 1:227, 3:35; D 2:85, 204, 3:204; M 1:354; S 1:107, 4:183; A 3:320; U 59, 86). Although *pakkhāletvā* (fr *pakkhāleti*; cf *khāleti*) is active, it is likely here that the Buddha’s feet “were washed,” upon his arrival, by a lay follower. Even today it is customary amongst traditional Sinhalese Buddhists to wash the feet of monks who have come for offerings (*dāna*, Sinh *dāne*).

⁴⁹⁰ “Resting against,” *nissāya*, fig “leaning against.” It is likely that the Buddha, in his advanced age, would be resting his back against the wall. However, due to the large number of monks and lay followers (in the next two paragraphs), it is unlikely that all of them could be resting their backs against the wall.

⁴⁹¹ This whole section also found at V 1:226-228; cf D 1:126; DA 2:473; UA 242, 361, 384.

(4) Furthermore, houselords, the immoral, one of moral failing, dies confused. This is the fourth disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

(5) Furthermore, houselords, the immoral, one of moral failing, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appears in a plane of misery, an bad destination, a lower realm, in hell. This is the fifth disadvantage for the immoral, one of moral failing.

These are the 5 advantages in being virtuous, of success in moral virtue. [86]

1.24 Houselords, there are **these 5 advantages of being virtuous**, of moral success. What five?

(1) Here, houselords, the virtuous, one of moral success, gains a great store of wealth through being heedful in managing his affairs. This is the first advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(2) Furthermore, houselords, for the virtuous, one of moral success, a good report of his reputation is spread about. This is the second advantage is for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(3) Furthermore, houselords, for the virtuous, one of moral success, whatever assembly he goes to, whether of nobles, of priests, of houselords or of recluses, he approaches with confidence, untroubled. This is the third advantage is for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(4) Furthermore, houselords, the virtuous, one of moral success, dies unconfused. This is the fourth advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

(5) Furthermore, houselords, the virtuous, one of moral success, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appears in a state of joy, in a happy destination, in heaven. This is the fifth advantage for the virtuous, one of moral success.

These are the 5 advantages in being virtuous, of success in moral virtue.

1.25 The Blessed One then **instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened**⁴⁹² the lay followers of Pāṭali, gāma with Dharma talk for most of the night.

Then he dismissed them, saying,

“Houselords, the night is far spent. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

“Yes, bhante,” the followers of Pāṭali, gāma replied in assent to the Blessed One. Having risen from their seats, they saluted the Blessed One, and keeping their right side to the Blessed One, departed.

Then not long after the lay followers of Pāṭali, gāma had left, the Blessed One went into solitude [meditated and entered dhyana].⁴⁹³

The Pāṭali, putra prophecy

1.26 Now at that time, Sunīdha and Vassa, kāra,⁴⁹⁴ chief ministers of Magadha, were fortifying the town of Pāṭali, gāma as a defence against the Vajjīs.⁴⁹⁵ At that time, too, many [87] thousands of devatas [deities] were

⁴⁹² This action sequence—**instructed** (*sandassetvā*), **inspired** (*samādapetvā*), **roused** (*samuttejetvā*) and **gladdened** (*sampahamsetvā*)...with Dharma talk—reflects the basic structure of the Buddha’s teaching method: (1) the Dharma is shown; (2) the listener/s are filled with enthusiasm; (3) they are fired with commitment; and (4) filled with joy. Comys (eg DA 1:293; UA 242; cf VA 1:65; MA 2:35) explain that by **instructing**, the Buddha dispels the listener’s delusion; by **inspiring** him, heedlessness is dispelled; by **rousing** him, indolence is dispelled; and by **gladdening**, brings the practice to a conclusion. In short, when we teach Dharma to benefit others, we should do our best to bring instruction, inspiration, motivation and joy to the listener. These 4 qualities are, in fact, the sixth or last of the ideal skills of a Dharma speaker. See SD 11.4 (4) & also L S Cousins, in his review of *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (tr Ñāṇamoli) in JBE 4 1997: 272, where gives a slightly different listing of the above. See also Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 1992:65-67. See §2.14 below.

⁴⁹³ “Entered into solitude,” *suññ’āgāre pāvīsi* (lit “entered an empty building”). See D:RD 2:92 (“entered into his private chamber”). The expression *suññ’āgāre abhirati*, “he delights in solitude” occurs 6 times in the Old Commentary on the Pārājika 4 (V 3:91-93) and 5 times in the Old Commentary on the Pācittiya 8 (V 4:25 f). See V:H 1:125 n5. D:W has “spent the remainder of the night in the rest-house left empty by their departure” is an unmarked amplified tr Vajirā & Story has “retired into privacy.” It is remarkable here to note that the early Western translators were right on the mark in their tr Apparently here, the Buddha rests for the night (around 2.00-4.00 am) by dwelling in the 4th dhyana (SA 2:230).

⁴⁹⁴ The chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra are in charge of Pāṭali, gāma’s fortifications. See prec n. On their rank, see §1.2n.

⁴⁹⁵ **Pāṭali, gāma** (Skt Pāṭali, grāmaka) thus becomes a fortified town standing on the south bank of the Ganges between Rājagaha and Vesālī, that is, on the borders between Magadha and Vṛjī country. Ajāta, sattu has commanded the construction of this fortress to repel any Vṛjī attack. Evidently, he is on the defensive, convinced of the Vajjī strength. He puts the <http://dharmafarer.org>

making their abode in Pāṭaligāma. And in those parts where devatas of great power made their abode, they bent the minds of the chief ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of middling power made their abode, they bent the minds of the middling ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of little power made their abode, they bent the minds of the lesser ministers to build their houses there.

1.27 With his divine eye, purified and surpassing that of the human, the Blessed One saw many thousands of devatas making their abode in Pāṭaligāma. Then the Blessed One, having risen early, when it was still night [just before daybreak], addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, who is fortifying Pāṭaligāma?”

“Bhante, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, are fortifying Pāṭaligāma as a defence against the Vajjīs.”

1.28 “Ānanda, it is just as if Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having taken counsel from the Thirty-three Gods, are fortifying Pāṭaligāma as a defence against the Vajjīs! Here, Ānanda, with my divine eye, purified and surpassing that of the human, I see many thousands of devatas making their abode in Pāṭaligāma. And in those parts where devatas of great power made their abode, they bent the minds of the chief ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of middling power made their abode, they bent the minds of the middling ministers to build their houses there. In those parts where devatas of little power made their abode, they bent the minds of the lesser ministers to build their houses there.

Ānanda, as far as the realm of the Aryas extend, as far as its trade-route⁴⁹⁶ goes, this will be the capital [foremost city], **Pāṭali,putta**, a city [bursting forth like the seeds from the seed-boxes of the Pāṭalī tree].⁴⁹⁷ **[88]** However, Ānanda, Pāṭaliputta will face three dangers—from fire, from water, from internal dissension.”⁴⁹⁸

Sunīdha and Vassa,kāra

1.29 Then Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having approached the Blessed One and exchanged greetings, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, the chief ministers of Magadha, said this to the Blessed One:

“May master Gotama⁴⁹⁹ together with the order of monks accept a meal from us tomorrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

1.30 Then, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, having understood that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from their seats, returned to their own houses. When the excellent meal of hard and soft foods were ready, they announced to the Blessed One that it was time:⁵⁰⁰

“Master Gotama, it is time for the meal.”

1.30.2⁵⁰¹ Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to the dwelling [rest-house?] of Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, and sat down on the prepared seat. Then Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, with their own hands,⁵⁰² served the order of monks with the Blessed One at its head with excellent foods, hard and soft, and waited on them.

Then when the Blessed One had finished his meal, and washed his bowl and hands, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, each took a low seat and sat down.

chief ministers Sunīdha and Vassakāra in charge of Pāṭaligāma’s fortifications (V 1:228; U 8.6). Cf AA 4:14-17. On the future of Pāṭaligāma, see **Intro (16.3)**.

⁴⁹⁶ “Trade-routes,” *vanippatho*, possible alt tr “trading centre” or commercial centre. Here Comy mentions that wholesale business occurs here: “as far as is the area where the merchants sell and buy in heaps the goods that they have bought, or as is the dwelling-place for merchants” (DA 2:541) and Sub-comy adds that there is a small market elsewhere (DAṬ 2:178): tr An Yang-Gyu 2003:59.

⁴⁹⁷ “City...,” *puṭa,bhedana*, lit refers to a town located at the confluence of a river. Figuratively, it refers to the bursting of the seed-boxes of the Pāṭalī or trumpet flower tree, *Bignonia suaveolens*. See PED: puṭa-bhedana.

⁴⁹⁸ This is a remarkable statement to make: either the city was later named following this remark, or “the Buddhists of the first century after the *parinirvāna* may perhaps be suspected of slightly embroidering this part of the narrative to connect their Master with the new and prosperous capital” (Warder 1970:70).

⁴⁹⁹ “Master Gotama,” *bho Gotama*. On the chief ministers’ manner of addressing see §1.3n.

⁵⁰⁰ Note here that the phrase “by the end of the night” (*tassā rattiyā accayena*) is missing, but found in other contexts [§§3.19a, 4:17]. See prev n where Sunīdha and Vassakāra addresses the Buddha by name.

⁵⁰¹ PTS ed misnumbers para here as “27.”

⁵⁰² “With their own hands,” *sa,hatthā*. Omitted in Walshe (D:R) and Vajirā & Story.

1.31 And when Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, were seated thus, the Blessed One gave thanks in these verses:⁵⁰³

In whatever place a wise man sets up his home,
He should there feed the virtuous and restrained who live the holy life.

To the deities there he should make offerings.⁵⁰⁴
Thus revered they will revere him, thus honoured they will honour him. [89]

They will show him compassion as a mother will her own child.
A man for whom the deities show compassion always sees good fortune.

Then when the Blessed One had given thanks with these verses, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, rose from their seats and left.

The Ganges

1.32 At that time, Sunīdha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha, following closely step for step behind⁵⁰⁵ the Blessed One, said:

“The gate by which the recluse Gotama leaves today shall be called the Gotama Gate (*Gotama, dvāra*),⁵⁰⁶ and the spot where he crosses the Ganges river shall be called the Gotama Crossing (*Gotama, tittha*).”⁵⁰⁷

1.33 Then the Blessed One reached the Ganges river. At that time the Ganges river was full and overflowing its banks so that a crow could drink from it. Wishing to cross over to the other side, some people were looking for a boat, some people were looking for a wooden raft, some people were binding together a log raft.⁵⁰⁸

Then the Blessed One, just as a strong man would stretch out his bent arm, or bend back his outstretched arm, vanished with the order of monks from the near bank of the Ganges river and landed on the farther bank.⁵⁰⁹

1.34 When the people saw the Blessed One (on the other side), some, wishing to cross over to the other side, some were looking for a boat, some were looking for a wooden raft, some were binding together a log raft. And the Blessed One, knowing their intention, uttered this verse of uplift:⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰³ It is interesting to note here that the Buddha does not give a Dharma discourse. According to the Sarvāstivāda version, the chief minister expresses his wish that through his alms offering to the order, the deities of the city may long prosper and be happy, dedicating the gift in their name. Winternitz thinks that these stanzas and others in this Sutta are original and “are the *first beginnings* of a poetical version of the life of Buddhas (in the form of *sacred ballads*)” (1972:40 n1 original italics). However, not all the stanzas here are found in the Tibetan or the Chinese translations. This probably means that either such stanzas are late or were interpolated later.

⁵⁰⁴ *Yā tattha devatā assu tāsāṃ dakkhiṇaṃ ādise*. Here *dakkhiṇa* (giving) refers to the religious offerings made to the devas, but this could also refer to dedication of merit to the devas. In later times, this is reinterpreted in popular Buddhism (esp amongst Sinhalese Buddhists) as “transference of merit.” See **Jāṇussoṇi S** (A 10.177/5:269-273) and **Tirokuḍḍa S** (Kh 7), SD 26-7. On the age of this stanzas and others here, see prev n [§1.31].

⁵⁰⁵ “Following closely step for step behind, *piṭṭhito piṭṭhito anubaddhā*, lit “followed right behind...” Vassakāra as we know is a very calculatively political person, and what we have here is an example of close physical proximity but great spiritual distance. Cf §3.1 (D 2:102). See **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1,1/1:1), SD 25.3(1.8).

⁵⁰⁶ According to the Sarvāstivāda version, the Buddha leaves by the west gate.

⁵⁰⁷ “Crossing,” *tittha*, usu rendered “ford” but here the river is too wide and deep, as evident from the next para.

⁵⁰⁸ A wooden raft (*uḷumpa*) here has its beams bound together by ropes of cloth (V 3:63); VA 1096 however says that it is nailed together. A log raft (*kulla*) is a roughly made float whose parts are tied together with creepers, etc (V 1:230; M 1:135; U 90).

⁵⁰⁹ The various texts differ regarding the details of the Buddha’s crossing the Ganges. They, however, agree that he uses his psychic power to teleport himself and the order across the river. The redactors added this episode despite the Vinaya rule against the public display of psychic powers (Pāc 8 = V 4:25): see **Kevaḍḍha S** (D 11), SD 1.7 (3.3). The Pali texts apparently regard the episode as “symbolic of the Buddha’s attainment of the ‘other side’ of transmigration, ie extinction (*nirvāna*), by the power of meditation” (Warder 1970:71).

⁵¹⁰ According to the Sarvāstivāda account, only the Buddha crosses the Ganges by his own power. The monks swim across while other disciples build a raft (Waldschmidt 1950-51:158). The imagery here is obvious: the Buddha has crossed <http://dharmafarer.org>

When they want to cross a sea, a lake or a pond,
People make a bridge or raft—the wise have already crossed. [Cf Dh 85]

Chapter 2 (Second Recital, *dutiya bhāṇavāra*)

VAJĪ (VRJĪ)

Koṭi, gāma⁵¹¹

[90] 2.1 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Koṭi, gāma**.”⁵¹²

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Koṭi, gāma. The Blessed One stayed (among the Vajjīs)⁵¹³ in Koṭi, gāma.

2.2.1⁵¹⁴ There, the Blessed One addressed the monks thus:⁵¹⁵

“Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating **the 4 noble truths** that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara [birth and death], both you and I.

And what, bhikshus, are the four?

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the arising of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the ending of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering that we have had to run for so long, to wander for so long, on this weary path of samsara, both you and I.

2.2.2 Bhikshus, it is through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the arising of suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the ending of suffering, through understanding, penetrating the noble truth that is the path leading to the ending of suffering that craving for existence is has been rooted out, that which leads to existence has been destroyed, that there is no more rebirth here.”

2.3 Thus said the Blessed One. Having spoken this, the Sugata [well-farer],⁵¹⁶ the Teacher further said this:
[91]

Not seeing the four noble truths as they really are,
Long is the weary path of samsara [birth and death], life after life.
Having seen them, one pulls out that which leads to existence,
Having uprooted sorrow’s root, there is no more rebirth.

the ocean of suffering; his immediate disciples, the monks, crosses the river of suffering using their own effort; and the lay disciples are working at their own means of the salvation, the raft. On this verse, cf Dh 85.

⁵¹¹ On this section, see §2.14 n by Rhys Davids on possible interpolation.

⁵¹² **Koṭi, gāma** (Skt Koṭi, grāmaka or Kuṭi, grāmaka), a village of the Vṛjīs (**Koṭi, gāma S 1**, S 5.431), located in the vicinity of Bhaddiya, nagara, about 1 *gāvuta* from the Ganges (MahvṬ 560). A *gāvuta* is a quarter *yojana*. A *yojana* is about 11.25 km (7 mi). As such, a *gāvuta* would be about 2.8 km. Buddhaghosa says that the village was so called because it was built near the dome (*koṭi* or *thūpikā*) of Mahā Panāda’s palace, said to have been located and submerged in the middle of the river (J 2:332 f; ThaA 1:287; Mahv 31.5 f).

⁵¹³ **Koṭi, gāma S 1** (S 56.21/5.431).

⁵¹⁴ The foll §§ [2.2-3] are found in V 1:230 f, S 5:432 & Nett 166.

⁵¹⁵ D 2:90 = S 5:431 = V 1:231 = Nett 166; Waldschmidt 1950-51:136.

⁵¹⁶ KR Norman regards *sugata* “as having the same relationship to *sugati* as *duggata* has to *duggati*, ie the implied *-gati* is not being used in its technical sense of ‘(category of) rebirth.’ So *duggata* is used in a general sense ‘(one who is) in a bad way’ = ‘poor,’ whereas *Sugata* is used in a very specialized sense ‘(one who is) in a (particularly) good way’ = ‘Buddha’” (1990:154 = 1993:162 f).

The 3 trainings

2.4 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Koṭigāma, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

NĀDIKA

Lay saints

2.5⁵¹⁷ Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Koṭigāma for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Nādika** [Ñātika].”⁵¹⁸

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large company of monks, arrived in Nādika, where the Blessed One stayed in the brick house.⁵¹⁹

2.6⁵²⁰ Then the venerable Ānanda went to the Blessed One and having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:⁵²¹

“Bhante, the monk named Sāḷha has died in Nādika:	what is his destiny, what is his future state?
Bhante, the nun named Nandā has died in Nādika:	what is her destiny, what is her future state?
Bhante, the layman [92] named Sudatta has died in Nādika:	what is his destiny, what is his future state?
Bhante, the laywoman named Sujātā has died in Nādika:	what is her destiny, what is her future state?
Bhante, the layman named Kakudha [Kakkaṭa] ⁵²² has died in Nādika:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>

⁵²³ Bhante, the layman named Kāliṅga:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Nikāṭa:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Kaṭṭissabha [Kaṭṭissaha]: ⁵²⁴	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Tuṭṭha:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Santuṭṭha:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Bhadda:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?</i>
Bhante, the layman named Subhadda has died in Nādika:	<i>what is his destiny, what is his future state?”</i>

2.7 “Ānanda, the monk Sāḷha, having right here and now realized for himself through direct knowledge, upon attaining the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom⁵²⁵

⁵¹⁷ The events of the following 3 sections [§2.5-7] are expanded in **Jana,vasabha S** (D 18).

⁵¹⁸ **Nādika** or **Ñātika** (according to Buddhaghosa, two villages of the same name on the same river bank) was on the highroad between Koti,gāma and Vesālī (V 1:230 ff; D 2:90 f, 200; M 1:205). The Buddha’s instructions to Ānanda given here are also recorded in the Saṃyutta, which has **Ñātika** as the place-name (S 5:356 ff.). Comys to both the Dīgha and the Saṃyutta confirm it as “Ñātika,” explaining that “There were two villages close by the same pond, inhabited by the sons of two brothers. Thus, both of them were called Ñātika (‘of the relatives’)” (DA 2:543; SA 2:74).

⁵¹⁹ **The brick house** (*giṇṇjak’āvasatha*) is mentioned in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,2.5/2:91 + 2.10/2:96), SD 9; **Cūḷa Go,siṅga S** (M 31,1/1:205), SD 41.11; V 1:232. It is specially mentioned because generally other buildings are made of wood (MA 2:235).

⁵²⁰ The foll §§ [2.6-9] are found in S 55.8/5:356.

⁵²¹ This section and the foll [§§2.6-7]—on the mirror of the Dharma—are also recorded in two Saṃyutta discourses: **Giṇṇjak’āvasatha S 1** (S 55.8/5:356 f) and **Giṇṇjak’āvasatha S 3** (S 55.10/5:359 f). In **Giṇṇjak’āvasatha S 2** (S 55.9/5:359), Ānanda questions the Buddha regarding the destiny of the monk Asoka, the nun Asokā, the layman Asoka, and the laywoman Asokā.

⁵²² **Giṇṇjak’āvasatha S 3** (S 55.10/5:359 f).

⁵²³ From here on [§§2.6-9] as at S 55.10/5:358-60.

⁵²⁴ **Giṇṇjak’āvasatha S 3** (S 55.10/5:359 f).

- that are influx-free with the destruction of the influxes, dwelt therein.⁵²⁶
- Ānanda, the nun **Nandā**, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,⁵²⁷
has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],⁵²⁸
and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman **Sudatta**, having destroyed the 3 fetters⁵²⁹ and diminished lust, hate and delusion,
is a once-returner,
returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.
- Ānanda, the laywoman **Sujātā**, having totally destroyed the 3 fetters, is a streamwinner,
not bound for the lower world,⁵³⁰
destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.
- Ānanda, the layman **Kakudha**, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,
has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],
and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman Kāliṅga, *having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,
has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],
and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.*
- Ānanda, the layman Nikāṭa, *having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,
has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],
and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.*
- Ānanda, the layman Kaṭissabha, *having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters,
has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner],*

⁵²⁵ “Freedom of mind and freedom through wisdom,” respectively, *ceto, vimutti* (or, freedom by concentration, ie through destruction of the mental hindrances) and *paññā, vimutti* (freedom through insight) (A 1:60). One who is freed by wisdom “may not have reached the 8 liberation or deliverances (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70,16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly freed in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain **the 8 liberations** (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*), which include the 4 formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called *freed both ways*, that is, freed from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood [§3.33]. Saḷha, like the arhats Sāriputta and Moggallāna, is “freed both ways” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*). The differences between the two types of freedom are given in **Mahānidāna S** (D 2:70 f) and **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 1:477 f). For full list of the 8 liberations, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15,35/2:70 f), SD 5.17.35. See also D 3:262, 228; **Vimokkha S**, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103, SD 3.4.37. See also **Aṭṭha Vimokkha**, SD 62.5 & Analayo 2009:141-148.

⁵²⁶ “With the destruction of the mental influxes destroyed,” *khīṇ’āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, bad (influences), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16,2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under *āsava*.

⁵²⁷ There are **10 fetters** (*saṃyojanā*): (1) personality view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), (5) repulsion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa, rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa, rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*), and (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). In some places, no 5 (*kāma, rāga*) is replaced by illwill (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*orambhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*uddhambhāgiya*). The abandonment of these 5 constitutes the state of the non-returner (*opapātika* or *anāgāmī*) (see **Ānāpānasati S**, M 118.9-12/3:80, SD 7.13). This verse evidently refers to the non-returner and seems to out of place in this section on the arhat.

⁵²⁸ The Pure Abodes (*suddh’āvāsa*) form the five highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa, loka*) inhabited only by non-returners who assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āviha (“Non-declining”), Ātappa (“Unworried”), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaṇiṭṭhā (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

⁵²⁹ The (first) three fetters: see n18.

⁵³⁰ *Avinīpāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinīpāta*, “the world of suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (*pañca, gati*) (D 3:234=33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal kingdom (*tiracchāna, yoni*), the ghost realm (*pitti, visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura, kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 1999:14-19.

- and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman Tuṭṭha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman Santuṭṭha, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman Bhadda, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, the layman Subhadda, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, has gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, [93] will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, there are more than 50 laymen from Nādika who have died, having totally destroyed the lower 5 mental fetters, have gained spontaneous rebirth [in the Pure Abodes as a non-returner], and without ever returning from that world, will gain parinirvana there.
- Ānanda, there are more than 90 laymen from Nādika who have died, having destroyed the 3 fetters and diminished lust, hate and delusion, are once-returners, and returning only once to this world, they will make an end of suffering.
- Ānanda, there are more than 500 laymen from Nādika who have died, having totally destroyed the 3 fetters, are streamwinners, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

The Dharma mirror

2.8 It is not remarkable, Ānanda, that human beings should die. But, Ānanda, if each time a person were to die and you were to question the Tathāgata in this manner, it would be wearisome for the Tathāgata!

Therefore, Ānanda, I will teach you a Dharma teaching called **the Dharma Mirror**,⁵³¹ by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth! Destroyed is the realm of the departed! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening!’

2.9 And what, Ānanda, is this Dharma Mirror, by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth for me! Destroyed is the realm of the departed for me! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening!’?⁵³²

⁵³¹ **The Dharma Mirror** (*dhamm’ādāsa*) is elsewhere called “the limbs of a streamwinner,” *sotāpannessa aṅgāni* (D 33.1.11(14)/3:227), ie the qualities of one who has attained streamwinning. For a shorter statement on the limbs of a streamwinner, see **Ogadha S** (S 55.2/5:343 On the faith of the streamwinner, see Gethin 2001:116. The preliminary practices that lead to the attainment of streamwinning are called “the limbs for streamwinning” (*sotāpatti-y-aṅgāni*: cf above) (D 33.1.11(13)/3:227; Pm 2:189 f). The (**Sotāpatti**) **Phala S** (S 55.55) lists the following as conducing towards gaining streamwinning: association with true persons (*sappurisa*), ie true practitioners; hearing the true teaching; skillful attention; and practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma (S 55.55/5:410 f). The qualities of a *sappurisa* are given at D 33.2.3(6)/3:252, 34.1.8(7)/3:283; M 113; A 7.64/4:113, 8:38/4:144 f & at M 110.14-24/3:23 f.

In **Paññā, vuḍḍhi S** (A 5.246) these same 4 qualities are called *vuḍḍhi, dhamma*, “virtues conducive to growth” (A 5.246/2:245); cf the 5 factors of noble growth (*ariya, vuḍḍhi*), A 3:80.

⁵³² *Khīna, nirayo ’mhi khīna, tiracchāna, yoni khīn, petti, visayo khīn’ āpāya, duggati, vinipāto, sotāpanno ’ham-asmi avinipāta, dhammo niyato sambodhi, parāyaṇō ti.* D 2:93 f; S 2:68, 70, 71, 5:356, 357-360, 387, 389; A 3:211, 213, 4:405, 407 f, 182, 184.

(1) THE LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER. Here, Ānanda, the noble disciple is accomplished in wise faith⁵³³ in the Buddha thus:

‘So too, is he the Blessed One:⁵³⁴ for, he is arhat, the fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable persons, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’

(2) He is accomplished in wise faith in the Dharma thus:

‘Well-taught is the true teaching of the Blessed One, to be self-realized, timeless, for one to “come and see,” leading onward, to be personally known by the wise.

(3) He is accomplished in wise faith in the sangha thus:

‘Of good conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; of upright conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; [94] of right conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples; of proper conduct is the Blessed One’s holy community of disciples. These four pairs of persons, the eight Individuals are this Blessed One’s holy community of disciples: worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, an incomparable field of merit for the world.’

(4) He is accomplished with moral virtues dear to the noble ones,⁵³⁵ unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, giving rise to concentration.⁵³⁶

This, Ānanda, is the Dharma Mirror, by which an accomplished noble disciple, if he wishes, could by himself discern of himself, thus:

‘Destroyed is hell for me! Destroyed is the animal birth for me! Destroyed is the realm of the departed for me! Destroyed is the plane of misery, the bad destination, the lower realm! I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening!’”

The 3 trainings

2.10⁵³⁷ Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Nāḍika, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

VESĀLĪ

Amba, pālī’s grove, Vesālī

2.11 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Nāḍika for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Vesālī**.”⁵³⁸

⁵³³ “Wise faith,” *avecca-p, pasāda*. There are 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka, saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravatī, saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,8, 401,23). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). *Amūlaka* = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). The streamwinner’s faith is defined in **Vīmaṅsaka S** (M 47) as “his faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (*ākāra, vatī saddhā dassana, mūlikā daḥhā*, M 47.16/ 1:320). On kinds of faith, see §5.8c n.

⁵³⁴ Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

⁵³⁵ “Virtues dear to the noble ones,” *ariya, kantāni sīlāni*. The virtues of the noble one are explained at Vism 221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts; hence, these virtues are dear to them (SA 2:74).

⁵³⁶ “Unbroken, ... giving rise to concentration,” *akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññūpasatthehi aparāmatthehi samādhi, samvattanakehi*. See UA 268. For details, see Vism 1.143-161/51-58.

⁵³⁷ These 2 sections [§§2.10-11]—the brick house & Ambapālī’s grove—are unique to this Sutta.

⁵³⁸ **Vesālī** (Skt Vaiśālī), the metropolis of the Licchavis, was the capital of the Vṛjī confederacy. It was already famous as the seat of a Solar dynasty and an important city in the Rāmāyaṇa. Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, was born in Kundagrāma (or Kundapura), a suburb of Vaiśālī (Sūtra Kṛtaṅga 1.2.3) and the residence of the Nāṭr or Nāṭa clan to which he belonged. This suburb was divided into a northern sector that was *ksatriya* and a southern sector that was *brāhmaṇa*. Vaiśālī has been identified with modern Besarh, 35 km (20 mi) north of Hajipur, in the Muzaffarpur district of Bihar. The site of the ancient city is called Rāja Viśal ka garh. Excavations have revealed pottery, terracottas, clay seals, and other objects, confirming the location of Vaiśālī, and attesting occupation during four periods between 500 BCE and 500 CE. (J Finegan, *An Archaeological History of Religions of Indian Asia*, 1989:83).

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in Vesālī, where the Blessed One stayed in Amba,pālī’s grove.

2.12 ⁵³⁹Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware: this is our instruction to you.

And how, bhikshus, is a monk **mindful**?

Here, ⁵⁴⁰ bhikshus, a monk,

- (1) having put away ⁵⁴¹ covetousness and displeasure ⁵⁴² in the world, ⁵⁴³ dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing body in the body, [94]
- (2) *Having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,* the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful observing feeling in the feelings.
- (3) *having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,* the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing mind in the mind.
- (4) *Having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world,* the monk dwells exertive, fully aware, mindful, observing mind-object in the mind-objects.

This, bhikshus, is how a monk is mindful.

2.13 And how, bhikshus, is a monk **fully aware**?

Here, bhikshus, a monk

- (1) while going forward or back, he is fully aware of what he is doing;
- (2) while looking forward or back, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
- (3) while bending or stretching, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
- (4) while carrying his upper robe, outer robe and bowl, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
- (5) while eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
- (6) while voiding or peeing, he is fully aware of what he is doing.
- (7) while walking, while standing, while sitting, while asleep, while awake, ⁵⁴⁵ while talking, or while

remaining silent, he is fully aware of what he is doing.

This, bhikshus, is how a monk is fully aware.

Bhikshus, a monk should dwell mindful and fully aware: this is our instruction to you.

⁵³⁹ As at 2.26. The following sections [§§2.12-13] as at **Sato S** (S 47.2/5:142), whose teaching is also found in **Gelaṅṅa S 1** (S 36.7/4:211). The **Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra** (with a touch of humour?) inserts this episode as the Buddha’s admonition to the monks as Āmrapālī approaches (MPS:Waldschmidt 10.7-15).

⁵⁴⁰ See §2.26 where this same passage explains the meaning of “taking yourself as refuge.”

⁵⁴¹ *Vineyya*, this means that the 5 hindrances have to be abandoned *prior* to practising *satipaṭṭhāna*. This is because the hindrances, in the form of mental impurities (*cetaso upakkilesa*), weaken wisdom (*paññāya dubbalī, karaṇe*) (D 2:83, 3:49, 101, A 2:211, 3:93, 100, 386 f, Vbh 245, 256).

⁵⁴² “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassam*. MA says that covetousness and displeasure signify the first two hindrances—sensual desire and ill will—principal hindrances to be overcome for the practice to succeed. They thus represent the observation of mind-objects, which begins with the 5 hindrances.

⁵⁴³ “World” (*loka*). The Vibhaṅga says: “This very body is the world, and the 5 aggregates of clinging (ie form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness) are the world—this is called the world.” (Vbh 195).

⁵⁴⁴ “Exertive, fully aware, mindful,” *ātāpī sampajāno satimā* (D 3:58, 77, 141, 211, 276 = M 1:56 ff (MA 1:243), 2:11 = S 5:141-143 (SA 3:180) = A 4:300, 457 = Pm 41 (PmA 175) = Vbh 193 f (VbhA 219 f). These stock terms are def at Vbh 194, 196 = 202; Vism 3; DA 363; MA 1:244; SA 1:204; AA 2:42; ItA 1:105; SnA 157; ApA 310. *Ātāpī* refers to right effort: (1) preventing negative states (*samvara, padhāna*); (2) overcoming them (*pahāna, padhāna*); (3) cultivating wholesome states (*bhāvanā, padhāna*); (4) maintaining them (*anurakkhanā, padhāna*) (A 2:74, 16, 15).

⁵⁴⁵ “When asleep, when awake,” *sutte jāgarite* = **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10.8/1:57), SD 13.3. Comy glosses *sutte* as *sayane*, “lying down, sleeping.” *Sutte* is often erroneously rendered as “falling asleep,” which is *niddam okkamati*. Similarly, *jāgarite* refers to the state of being awake, not to “waking or rising from sleep” (*pabujjhati*). “The practice of mindfulness focused on sleeping means one uses the old experience, now past, of having been asleep as the focus of superpower mindfulness **now**. It is mindfulness taking an old experience as its object. This may sound pedantic to you now, but it becomes crucially important, as you will see when I explain the focus of mindfulness on the *citta* (mind-consciousness).” (Brahmavamso 2002:26, 32-34). See header §C n.

Amba, pālī

2.14⁵⁴⁶ Then the courtesan **Amba, pālī**⁵⁴⁷ heard that the Blessed One had arrived in Vesālī and was staying there at her mango grove.

Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having had magnificent carriages prepared, mounted a carriage, left Vesālī with the magnificent carriages and headed for her park. Having gone in her carriage as far as the ground would permit, she alighted from her carriage and went on foot to where the Blessed One was.

Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, she sat down at one side. When the courtesan Ambapālī was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened her with a Dharma talk.⁵⁴⁸

Then the courtesan Ambapālī, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from me tomorrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

Then, the courtesan Ambapālī, understanding that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from her seat and left.

Ambapālī’s lion-roar⁵⁴⁹

2.15 Now the Licchavīs⁵⁵⁰ of Vesālī heard that the Blessed One [96] had arrived in Vesālī and was staying in Ambapālī’s grove.

Then the Licchavīs of Vesālī, having had magnificent carriages prepared, mounted their carriages, left Vesālī in the magnificent carriages. Now, some of the Licchavīs were blue, blue in colour, dressed in blue, with blue ornaments; some of the Licchavīs were yellow, yellow in colour, dressed in yellow, with yellow ornaments; some of the Licchavīs were red, red in colour, dressed in red, with red ornaments; some of the Licchavīs were white, white in colour, dressed in white, with white ornaments.⁵⁵¹

2.16 Then the Licchavī youths rode [racing and knocking each others’ carriages] axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke against the courtesan Ambapālī. Then the Licchavīs said this to the courtesan Ambapālī:

⁵⁴⁶ The foll §§ [2.14-19] as at V 1:231-33 but differs as to location. Rhys Davids notes: “From this point down to the words ‘he rose from his seat,’ in [§2.19, RD errs, giving it as ‘II, 24’] is, with a few unimportant variations, word for word the same as **Vinaya**, vol I, pp 231-3. But the passage there follows immediately after the verses translated above I, 34, so that the events here (in §§14-18) localized at Vesālī, are there localized at Koṭigāma. Our §II,5 is then inserted between our sections II,18 and II,19; and our section II,11 does not occur at all, the Exalted One only reaching Ambapālī’s grove when he goes there (as in our section II,19) to partake of the meal to which he had been invited. Buddhaghosa passes over this apparent discrepancy in silence.” (D:RD 2:102 n1; emphasis added.) In other words, the V account here puts **the Ambapālī episode** at Koṭigāma (after which the Buddha heads for Nāṭikā or Nādikā). It could be conjectured here that §§2.1-13 have been interpolated, probably after Buddhaghosa’s time. Even so, it does not mean that these passages are unhistorical. Alternatively, it is possible that the Vinaya reciters have the wrong location.

⁵⁴⁷ Amba, pālī is Vesālī’s celebrated courtesan or geisha (*gaṇikā* or *gaṇakī*). She has a son Vimala Koṇḍañña who becomes a monk and arhat, after listening to whom she joins, too, joins the order (Thī 252-270; ThīA 206 f). See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004:9.14-15.

⁵⁴⁸ See §1.25 n above.

⁵⁴⁹ This episode of Ambapālī’s encounter with the Licchavīs [§2.16] is absent from the Tibetan Dulva version, where the Buddha, on seeing Amrapālī approaching in the distance, warns, “Bhikshus, Amrapālī is coming! Be mindful, wise, and thoughtful.” The Licchavīs separately visit the Buddha. (Rockhill 1884:128 f).

⁵⁵⁰ **The Licchavī** was one of the main tribes, the most important and powerful, forming the Vṛjī confederacy. They were the founders of Vaiśālī. On their qualities that kept them strong and successful as a people, see §1.4 & also **Kaliṅgāra S** (S 20.8/2:267 f). See DPPN: Licchavī.

⁵⁵¹ These colours are also those of the devas of Susīma’s host: see **Susīma S** (S 2.29/1:64 f) as mentioned it is Saṃyutta Comy (SA 1:125): cf SD 12.12 Intro. These colours probably represented the various Licchavī clans. Dīgha Comy notes that the whole Licchavī tribe would join in any ceremony held in the Licchavī house, and that they would all unite in honouring any distinguished visitors to their city (DA 2:521): see “condition for non-decline” (*aparihāniya, dhamma*) no 7 [§1.4]. This is probably the reason for the enthusiasm of the Licchavī youth in honouring the Buddha and the order with a meal offering.

“Hey,⁵⁵² Ambapālī, why are you riding axle to axle, wheel to wheel, yoke to yoke against Licchavī youths?”⁵⁵³

“Because, young sirs, I have invited the Blessed One together with the order for a meal tomorrow!”

“Hey, Ambapālī, give up this meal (to us) for a hundred thousand (pieces of money)!”⁵⁵⁴

“Young sirs, even if you were to give me Vesālī with all its territories,⁵⁵⁵ I would not give you such a great meal!”

Then the Licchavī youths snapped their fingers,⁵⁵⁶ saying:

“Alas! We have been beaten by this Ambakā!⁵⁵⁷ Alas! We are defeated by this mango woman!”

Then the Licchavī youths headed for Ambapālī’s grove.

2.17 Now the Blessed One saw the Licchavīs coming from afar, and he said this to the monks:

“Bhikshus, those who have never seen the Thirty-three gods, just look⁵⁵⁸ at [97] the troop of Licchavīs. Look⁵⁵⁹ at them, and you will have a good idea⁵⁶⁰ of the host of the Thirty-three gods!”⁵⁶¹

2.18 Then the Licchavīs, having gone in their carriages as far as the ground would permit, alighted from their carriages and went on foot to where the Blessed One was.

Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, they sat down at one side. When the Licchavīs were thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with a Dharma talk.

Then the Licchavīs, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One,⁵⁶² said this to the Blessed One:

⁵⁵² “Hey,” *je*, exclamation: Oh! Ah! Now then! (V 1:232, 292 *gaccha je*; M 1:126; DhA 4:105; VvA 187, 207. It is possible that *je* is cognate with *jaya* (Success! Victory!) or modern Hindi *jai*. As such, it is a cordial greeting. Here I follow M:ÑB 220 (M 21.9/1:126).

⁵⁵³ Note a tone of pride in the speech of the Licchavī youths.

⁵⁵⁴ It is interesting why the Licchavīs do not opt for another day, say the following, to invite the Buddha for alms. Perhaps they are vying for the first alms offering to the Buddha in Vesālī on this occasion. It is also likely that the Buddha would leave Vesālī the day after Ambapālī’s alms offering.

⁵⁵⁵ “With all its territories,” *s’āhāram* = *sa āhāra* (D 2:96), possibly, “with all its tributary states.” Comy glosses it as *sa.janapadam*, “with its states/regions” (DA 2:545). At **Bīja S** (S 22.54/3:54) *viññāṇa*~, “consciousness with its food/nutriments”: see “The Radiant Mind,” SD 8.3.9. PED here: “with its subject territory.” BHS D gives “(3) district, province: Māy 28 [Mvy 28?]; see Hultzs, Aśoka, 163 n11.”

⁵⁵⁶ “(They) snapped their fingers,” *añgulī poṭhesum*, which Buddhaghosa glosses as *añgulī cālesum*, “they shook their fingers” (VA 1097 = DA 2:545). DPL (Childers), under *poṭheti*, defines *añgulīyo poṭheti* as “to snap the fingers as a token of pleasure” (qu James D’Alwis, *An Introduction to Kaccāyana’s Grammar of the Pali Language*, Colombo, 1863, 1:75). *Añgulī* is clearly “fingers,” so CPD def of *añgulī,poṭha* as “clapping the hands” (J 5:67) is problematic; but under *añgulī poṭhesum* (D 2:96) gives “snapped their fingers.” BHS D defines the Buddhist Skt cognate *sphoṭā* as “snap of the fingers” (*Saddharma,puṇḍarīka*, ed Kern & Nanjio, 1912:388.9 prose). It might be surmised here that the Licchavī youths (being youthful) are responding to their “failure” by good-natured snapping their fingers rather than reacting dismally. After all, considering their youthful and tribal pride, it is very likely they regard making an offering to the Buddha as a matter of prestige than an act of merit. But cf §2.15n above on the Licchavīs.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ambakā*, “mango woman” (D 2:96; V 1:232; A 3:349) and is related to *ambā* (= *ammā*), “mother” (Abhp 244; Kaccv 115, Sadd 652, Moggv 2:63). This word is mentioned twice here and is clearly a word play. As such, I have used the Pali in the first instance, and tr it in the second. The word is also found in *satt’ambakā cetiya*, the Shrine of the Seven Women [§3.2].

⁵⁵⁸ *Oloketha*, “Look!”

⁵⁵⁹ *Avaloketha*, “Look! Regard!” *Avaloketi* also tr “he looks back (at).” This verb is more common than *oloketha*. Cf *apaloketi*, “he looks back (at)” [§4.1 & n].

⁵⁶⁰ “Have a good idea,” *upasaṃharatha* fr *upasaṃharati*; here meaning “compare.” See its range of meanings in CPD.

⁵⁶¹ This comparison also at DhA 3:280.

⁵⁶² At this point, the Tibetan Dulva version adds that “When he had finished speaking, a Brahman youth called Kapila (*Ser-skyā*) rose up (f 559^a) and said, ‘Blessed One, may I venture; Tathāgata, may I give vent (to my feelings)?’ When the Buddha permits him, Kapila sings 3 stanzas praising the Buddha. The Licchavīs are so pleased with him that each of them gives him the cloak they are wearing. Again the Buddha instructed them the Dharma. Gladdened at the Buddha’s word, the Licchavīs invite the Buddha for the meal on the morrow, but the Buddha tells them of his prior acceptance of Amrapalī’s invitation. Having saluted the Buddha, the Licchavīs then leave.

“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from us tomorrow.”

“Licchavīs, we have consented to a meal from the courtesan Ambapālī tomorrow.”

Then the Licchavī youths snapped their fingers, saying:

“Alas! We have been beaten by this Ambakā! Alas! We are defeated by this mango woman!”

Then the Licchavīs, having rejoiced in the Blessed One’s word and approved of it, rose from their seats, and keeping their right side to him, left.

2.19 Then the courtesan Ambapālī, by the end of the night,⁵⁶³ having prepared excellent foods, hard and soft, announced to the Blessed One that it was time:

“Bhante, it is time for the meal.”

Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to Ambapālī’s house, and sat down on the prepared seat. Then the courtesan Ambapālī, with her own hands, served the order of monks with the Buddha at its head, with excellent foods, hard and soft, and waited on them.

Then when the Blessed One had finished his meal, and washed his bowl and hands, the courtesan Ambapālī took a low seat and sat down [98] at one side.

2.19.2 And when the courtesan Ambapālī was seated thus, she said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, I give this grove to the order of monks with the Buddha at its head.”⁵⁶⁴

The Blessed One accepted the grove.

Then after the Blessed One had instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened the courtesan Ambapālī with a Dharma talk, she rose from her seat and left.

The 3 trainings

2.20 Then the Blessed One, while staying in the Vesālī, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

BELUVA

The Buddha’s last rains retreat

2.21 Now when the Blessed One had stayed at Ambapālī’s grove for as long as he thought fit, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to the hamlet of **Beluva**.”⁵⁶⁵

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large company of monks arrived in the hamlet of Beluva. The Blessed One stayed at the hamlet of Beluva.

[Ten months before the Mahā Parinirvana.]⁵⁶⁶

2.22⁵⁶⁷ Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

⁵⁶³ Cf §1.30a n above.

⁵⁶⁴ The Sarvāstivāda version & Tibetan Dulva do not mention this, only saying that the Buddha praises the meal.

⁵⁶⁵ That is, the hamlet of Beluva, **Beluva, gāma** (Skt Bilva, grāmaka) or Veḷuva (Skt Veṇu, grāmaka), near Vesālī (Skt Vaiśālī).

⁵⁶⁶ Buddhaghosa, probably aware of the discrepancy of dates, assigns this episode to the 10th month before the Buddha’s parinirvana (DA 2:547 = SA 3:202). The SA Poraṇa Ṭikā says that the Buddha went into “fruition attainment (*phala, samāpatti*) [Vism 23], by which life is vitalized, sustained, prolonged... He entered the attainment with the determination, ‘Let the pain not arise for another ten months,’ and the pain, suppressed by the attainment, did not arise for another ten months” (qu at S:B 1920 n138). BDict: **Phala**, as “path-result” or “fruition,” it denotes those moments of supermundane consciousness which flash forth immediately after the moment of path-consciousness and which, till the attainment of the next higher path, may during the practice of Insight (*vipassanā*) still recur innumerable times. If thus repeated, they are called the “attainment of fruition” (*phala, samāpatti*). Cf §2.23 n. On the discrepancy of the dates of the Buddha’s parinirvana, see **Intro (9.4)** above.

⁵⁶⁷ The foll [§§2.22-26], with a slightly modified narrative Intro, is found in (**Bhagavā**) **Gilāna S** (S 47.9/5: 152-54).

“Bhikshus, stay for **the rains retreat**⁵⁶⁸ around Vesālī where you have friends or acquaintances or supporters. I will spend the rains retreat here in the hamlet of Beluva.”

“Yes, bhante,” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One, and they spent the rains retreat around Vesālī where they had friends or acquaintances or [99] supporters, and the Blessed One spent the rains retreat there in the hamlet of Beluva.

The Buddha’s first dysentery attack

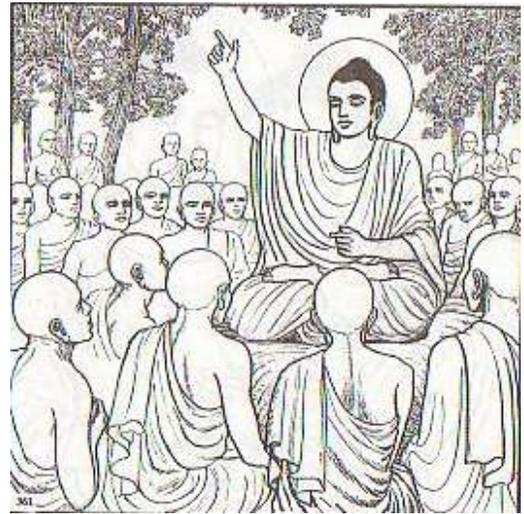
2.23⁵⁶⁹ Now when the Blessed One had entered the rains retreat, **a serious illness**⁵⁷⁰ arose in him, with severe pains, as if he were about to die. But he endured all this mindfully and fully aware, and without complaining.

Then it occurred to the Blessed One,

“It is not fitting that I should attain parinirvana without addressing my supporters and taking leave of the order of monks. I must make an effort to ward off this illness and dwell, having determined the life-force.”⁵⁷¹

Then the Blessed One made an effort to ward off the illness and dwelled, having determined the life-force. Then the Blessed One’s illness abated.

2.24⁵⁷² Then the Blessed One recovered from the illness. Not long after recovering from the illness, he came out of his dwelling and sat down on the prepared seat in the shade of the dwelling.⁵⁷³



⁵⁶⁸ The Buddha spends his **last rains retreat** here. As it is the month of Āsālha (Āṣāḍha, June-July), with the rains approaching, the Buddha and the order enter the rains retreat (his last) at Beluva. The Buddha instructs the monks to spend retreat in groups in different places all around Vesālī. According to the Sarvāstivāda version & Tibetan Dulva, this is in response to a bad famine that has occurred there. The Pali version, however, makes no mention of any famine. The Commentary simply states that the small village where the Buddha spends retreat is neither able to accommodate nor feed so many monks. (DA 2:546)

⁵⁶⁹ This whole section [§§2.23-25] has the following in **the Tibetan version**: “Ānanda, I do not have the idea that the order of monks is mine, that I must cleave to the order and lead it, so how should I have a last exhortation, even a slight one, with which to instruct the order? Whatever teachings I have had which were relevant to the order of monks, I have already taught them as the principles which must be practised, namely, [the 4 focuses of mindfulness, the 4 right efforts, the 4 bases of success, the 5 faculties, the 5 powers, the 7 awakening-factors, the noble eightfold path]. As Buddha I do not have the closed-fistedness of a teacher who thinks he must conceal things as unsuitable to others.” (Snellgrove, BSOAS 36, 1973:401)

⁵⁷⁰ The “severe illness” here [as at §4.20] shows symptoms of dysentery. Winternitz (1939:9) says that this section [§2.23] is amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” At §3.10 the Buddha however relinquishes his lifespan. See also §§2.25 & 5.13 f.

⁵⁷¹ *Atha kho Bhagavato etad ahoṣi: Na kho me taṃ paṭirūpaṃ yo ’haṃ anāmantevā upaṭṭhāke anapaloketvā bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ parinibbāyeyyaṃ. Yan nunā ’haṃ imaṃ ābādhaṃ viriyena paṭippanāmetvā jīvita, saṅkhāraṃ adhiṭṭhāya vihareyyan ti.* It appears that Nāgasena (Miln 141) and the Sarvāstivādins take this episode to mean that the Buddha is actually at the point of dying, and so by sheer will power **extended his life for at least 3 more months** (to the end of the rains retreat). Note, however, that no duration is mentioned here, but see §2.22 n where this episode is said to be 10 months before the parinirvana; cf §3.9. The Skt texts says that the Buddha extends his life here so that Supriya and Subhadra could meet him: **see Intro (9.5)** above.

Comys, however, say that the Buddha did not let go of his life-formation like a ball of clay from his hand, but for exactly 3 months he entered upon the attainment of the fruits (*phala, samāpatti*), thinking, “I will not enter upon them for any longer than that” (DA 556; SA 3:253; UA 327). For a different opinion, see Jaini 1958 (2001:193). It should be noted, however, that this life-extension is different from the one mentioned at the Cāpāla Shrine [§3.3]. See also Intro (9).

⁵⁷² This whole episode missing in the Tibetan Dulva version.

⁵⁷³ “In the shade of the dwelling,” *vihāra, pacchāyāyaṃ*. D:W renders it as “in front of his dwelling,” probably from misreading *pacchā* (behind, back, after, afterwards, westward). Actually the word here is *pacchāyā* (shade, a shaded place) (V 1:180, 2:193; D 1:152 = *chāyā*, DA 1:310, 2:205; A 3:320).

Then the venerable Ānanda went up to the Blessed One and having saluted him, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, I have seen the Blessed One enjoying comfort, and I have seen the Blessed One patiently enduring.⁵⁷⁴ And, bhante, my body has become weak [unwieldy] as if drugged [drunk].⁵⁷⁵ I’m disoriented and things are unclear to me as a result of the Blessed One’s illness.⁵⁷⁶”

Only this much comfort have I, thinking: ‘The Blessed One will not pass into parinirvana until he has made some statement [pronouncement] concerning the order of monks.’” [100]

2.25 ⁵⁷⁷“Ānanda, what does the order of monks expect of me? I have taught the Dharma, Ānanda, making no distinction between inner and outer.⁵⁷⁸ **the Tathāgata has no ‘teacher’s fist’⁵⁷⁹** in respect of teachings.

2.25.2 Surely, Ānanda, if there were anyone who thinks: ‘I shall take care of [look after] the order,⁵⁸⁰ that ‘The order should refer to me,⁵⁸¹ then let him make some statement about the order. But, Ānanda, it does not occur to the Tathāgata to think, ‘I shall take care of the order,’ that ‘The order should refer to me.’ So why should the Tathāgata make a statement about the order?⁵⁸²

2.25.3 Ānanda, I am now old, aged, great in years, my journey done, I have reached the sum of my days, I am turning 80.⁵⁸³ Ānanda, just as an old cart is kept going by being held together with straps, even so the Tathāgata’s body is kept going by being strapped up.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁷⁴ *Diṭṭhā me bhante bhagavato phāsu, diṭṭham me bnahte bhagavato khamanīyam.*

⁵⁷⁵ “My body...is as if drugged,” *me...madhuraka,jāto viya kāyo.* Ānanda expresses the same sentiments at the parinirvana of Sāriputta (**Cunda (Samaṇ’uddesa) S**, S 47.13/5:162), reflected in his **Thera,gāthā**: “All the quarters have become dim; the teachings are unclear to me. | My spiritual friend has gone, and everything is cast in darkness” (Tha 1034). “The old ones have passed away. I do not get on with the new ones. | Today I meditate all alone, like a bird gone to its nest” (Tha:N 94 = Tha 1036). DPL says that *madhuraka* is “the Jivaka plant,” quoting Abhidhānappadīpikā (ed W Subhūti), 1865: 594. This probably led Rhys Davids to render it here as “my body has become weak as a creeper,” but PED (W Stede?) rejects as erroneous (sv Madhuraka), saying that the usual tr has been “become languid or weak.” Comys paraphrase *madhuraka* as: “it has become heavy” (*sañjāta,garu,bhāvo*, AA 3:259); “it has become unwieldy, as if heavy” (*sañjāta,garu,-bhāvo viya akammañño*, SA 2:309); “it has become unwieldy, stiff, like a person impaled with a stake” (*sañjāta,garu,bhāvo sañjāta,thaddha,bhāvo sūle uttāsita,puriso viya*, DA 2:547, SA 3:203; *Madhuraka* also means “sweet, pleasant, charming,” but PED gives it as “full of sweet drink, intoxicated.” For *madhuraka viya kāya*, see **D 16,2.24/2:99; S 22.84/3:106 f, 47.9-15/5:153, 47.13/5:162; A 5.56/3:70 f (madhuraka c’eva kāya)**; also UA 246. See also S:W 3:90 n2 & S:B 1078 n149.

⁵⁷⁶ *Disā’pi me na pakkhāyanti, dhammā pi maṃ na paṭibhanti bhagavato gelaññena:* **D 16,2.24/2:99; S 22.84/3:106 f, 47.9/5:153, 47.13/5:162; A 5.56/3:70 f (madhuraka c’eva kāya)**; also UA 246. See also S:W 3:90 n2 & S:B 1078 n149. On “things are unclear to me,” *dhammā pi maṃ na paṭibhanti*, cf A 5.56/3:69. For a psychological expl on Ānanda’s reaction, see **Udakūpama S** (A 7.15), SD 28.6 (1.2.5).

⁵⁷⁷ Winternitz (1939:9) says that this section [§2.25] is amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” See also §§2.23 & 5.13 f.

⁵⁷⁸ Comys: “Making no distinction between inner and outer,” *anantaram abāhiraṃ karitvā*. Comys explain it as making no distinction of either inner or outer by way of the Dharma or by way of persons. Making an ‘inner’ of the Dharma means to teach, thinking, ‘This much Dharma I will not teach others.’ Making an ‘outer’ of the Dharma means to teach, thinking, ‘I will teach this much to others.’ Making an ‘inner’ of the person means to teach, thinking, ‘I will teach this person.’ Making an ‘outer’ of the person means to teach, thinking, ‘I will not teach this (person).’ Thus he teaches without making a distinction. This is the meaning.” (DA 2:547 = SA 3:203). On these twofold distinction, see Miln 1145 f, 159 f. See foll n.

⁵⁷⁹ *N’atthi ācariya,muṭṭhi.* Comys: “The teacher’s fist is found amongst outsiders who do not tell certain things to their pupils when they are still boys (*dahara,kāle*), who keep certain teachings for their beloved and favourite pupils, telling it to them only at the last moment from their deathbed. The Tathāgata does not hold back anything, keeping a closed fist, thinking, ‘I will teach this in my old age, at the last moment.’” (DA 2:548 = SA 3:203 f)

⁵⁸⁰ *Ahaṃ bhikku,saṅghaṃ pariharissāmi ti:* Walshe tr *pariharissāmi* as “take charge of” (D:W 245). On apparent contradiction regarding *pariharissāmi* (wrongly tr as “I will lead”), cf **Catummā S** (M 67,13/4:459), SD 34.7, where it has a different sense. On how the Buddha addresses him, using *tathāgata* and *ahaṃ*, see **Cūla Māluṅkyaputta S** (M 63), SD 5.8 (3).

⁵⁸¹ *Mam’uddesiko bhikkhu,saṅgho’ti.*

⁵⁸² On tr of “shall take care of” (*pariharissāmi*), see **Catummā S** (M 67), SD 34.7 (2).

⁵⁸³ *Ahaṃ kho pan’ānanda, etarahi jiṇṇo vuddho mahallako addha’gato vayo’anuppatto, āsītiko me vayo vattati.* If we take this as meaning that the Buddha has reached or passed his 80th birthday, and that, as traditionally asserted, he passes away on Vesak day, he would be 81 then. However, the verb *vattati*, “turns,” here clearly means that the Buddha *is going to be* 80, but not yet. Note that the Buddha says to Subhadda, “I was 29 years, Subhadda, | when I went forth... | Now over 50 years have passed” (§5.27.3). So, it is more likely that the Buddha is 79 at that time, and passes away on his 80th birthday.

⁵⁸⁴ “By being strapped,” *veṭha,missakena*, following Norman and Bodhi. This seems to be like some kind of what we today call a “body-brace.” See Tha:N 143 n & S:B 1920 n141.

Ānanda, it is only when the Tathāgata pays no attention to all the signs and by the ending of certain feelings, enters and dwells in *the signless concentration of mind*,⁵⁸⁵ that the Tathāgata’s body knows comfort.⁵⁸⁶

Self as refuge

2.26 Therefore, Ānanda, **dwelt with yourself as an island, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwelt with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.**⁵⁸⁷

And how does a monk dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge. And how, Ānanda, does a monk dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge?

2.27 Here,⁵⁸⁸ Ānanda,

(1) a monk⁵⁸⁹ dwells⁵⁹⁰ exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating body in the body,⁵⁹¹

removing⁵⁹² covetousness and displeasure [discontent]⁵⁹³ in regard to the world;⁵⁹⁴

(2) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating feelings in the feelings,

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;

(3) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

contemplating mind [thoughts] in the mind,

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;

(4) he dwells exertive, clearly aware, mindful,

⁵⁸⁵ “The signless concentration of mind,” *animittam ceto, samādhim*. Bodhi notes that this samadhi “must be different from the one with the same name mentioned at [Animitta S, S 40.9/4:268 f]” (S:B 1921 n141). The Saṃyutta Comy (SA 3:90) on Animitta S explains it as deep insight concentration, the present one as fruition attainment (*phala, samāpatti*), which would then identify it with the *animittam ceto, samādhim* here. Comy of Mahā Parinibbāna S simply says it is “fruition attainment” (DA 2:548). On the Buddha’s first serious illness, see §2.23 n.

⁵⁸⁶ Bodhi notes that if Comys (SA 2:425; ApA 58, 358; J 1:63) were right in saying that Ānanda was born on the same day as the Bodhisattva, this passage would hardly make sense, “for the Buddha would not need to insist on the frailties of old age if Ānanda too was an old man” (S:B id). Bodhi thinks that Ānanda “must have been considerably younger than the Buddha, perhaps by as much as thirty years” (S:B 804 n296). It is interesting that the Tibetan sources (eg the Dulva or Vinaya) says that Ānanda is the same age as Rāhula (Rockhill 57), which should be a good age for one to be the Buddha’s life-long personal attendant. On the differences of opinion regarding Ānanda’s age amongst the early Buddhist schools, see C Witanachchi, “Ānanda,” *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* 1:529. See also Thomas 1949:123; Rhys Davids’ article on “Devadatta” in ERE; DPPN 1:268.

⁵⁸⁷ *Tasmā-t-ih’Ānanda atta, dīpā viharatha atta, saraṇā anañña, saraṇā, dhamma, dīpā dhamma, saraṇā anañña, saraṇā* (D 16,2.26/2:100 = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 47.14/5:164): many of them at different venues and to different interlocutors. On the tr of *dīpa* here as “island” or as “lamp” & discussion, see **Intro (6.1)** above.

⁵⁸⁸ As at §2.12. This well known passage is from **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,1/2:290) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,3/-1:55). At §2.12 this passage defines “how a monk is mindful.” See nn there.

⁵⁸⁹ Here “a monk” (*bhikkhu*) may refer to either an ordained monastic or anyone who is meditating (here, doing satipaṭṭhāna) (DA 3:756; MA 1:241; VbhA 216 f; cf SnA 251): see SD 13.1 (3.1.1.5). On meditation as renunciation, see **Hālid-dakāni S 1** (S 22.3/3:9-12), SD 10.12; **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.1 (14.7); **Sexuality**, SD 31.7 (1.6.2). See Dh 142; also Dh 362, 260-270. Cf Bhikkhu Vagga (ch 25) and Brāhmaṇa Vagga (ch 26) of Dh.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā, domanassam*. Here we find 4 of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*) in action: see SD 13.1 (4.2).

⁵⁹¹ “Contemplating body in the body” (*kāye kāyānupassī*). See SD 13.1 (3.4).

⁵⁹² *Vineyya* can mean “should remove” (as pot, like *vineyya*, Sn 590) or as “having removed” (as ger, like *vinayitvā*, Pm 1:244), and both senses apply in Satipaṭṭhāna S. U Silananda similarly ends the sentence with “removing covetousness and grief in the world” (1990:177); also 1990:22-25. See SD 13.1 (4.2c) above.

⁵⁹³ “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassam*, alt trs: “desire and discontent,” “desiring and disliking,” or “longing and loathing.” Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders it as “hankering and fretting [in regard to the world].” See SD 13.1 (4.2) above.

⁵⁹⁴ “World” (*loka*). The Vibhaṅga says: “This very body is the world, and the 5 aggregates of clinging (ie, form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness) are the world—this is called the world.” (Vbh 195). However, in his amplified tr at Vibh 105, U Thittila has “world (ie, in ideational objects)” (*dhammā*, mental objects) (Vibh:T 139).

contemplating dharmas in the dharmas,

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world.

That, Ānanda, is how a monk dwell with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge. [101]

2.28 Ānanda, those who, now in my time or after me, live thus, with himself as an island, with himself as refuge, with no other refuge; dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge—they become the highest,⁵⁹⁵ but, Ānanda, they must be those who desire to learn [who have desire for training].⁵⁹⁶

Chapter 3

(Third Recital, *tatiya bhāṇavāra*)

CĀPĀLA SHRINE

The Buddha's love of tree shrines

[102] 3.1⁵⁹⁷ Then, when it was morning, the Blessed One dressed and, taking bowl and robe, entered Vesālī for alms.⁵⁹⁸ Having walked in Vesālī for alms, he had his meal, after which he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Bring along a mat, Ānanda. We will go to the Cāpāla Shrine⁵⁹⁹ for the midday rest.⁶⁰⁰

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Holding the mat, the venerable Ānanda followed the Blessed One as he walked.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁵ “The highest,” *tama-t-agge* (“the highest”): Comy gives a long expl, the essence of which is “cutting off all yokes to darkness (ignorance)” (*sabbam tama,yogam chinditvā*, DA 548); also at S 47.9/5:154, where Comy takes it as *tama-agge*, with the infix *-t-* as euphonic junction (*pada,sandhi*): see S:B 1921 n143. Bodhi notes that this word is not found in the fragments of the Turfan Skt version, but the Tib and Chin parallels, probably based on Skt texts, point to a meaning as “the highest” (S:B 1921 n143). See also Vajira & Story n20.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ye keci sikkhā,kāmāti*, D 2:101, 3:58, 77; S 3:42, 5:154, 163, 164.

⁵⁹⁷ This episode of the Buddha's relinquishment of the rest of his lifespan at the Cāpāla shrine [§§3.1-10] is found in **Cetiya S** (S 51.10/5:258-263)—SA 3:251-255 parallel DA 2:554-558—and **Āyu,sama S** (U 6.1/62-64), commented on at UA 322-330; also at Nett 60. This episode and the subsequent earth-tremors (*bhūmi,cāla*) [§§3.1-20] are found in **Bhūmi,-cālā S** (A 8.70/4:308-313).

⁵⁹⁸ Comy says that the Buddha has just left Ukkacelā and here enters Vesālī. Ukkacelā is not mentioned anywhere in this sutta. Comy also implicitly says that the teachings given here are recorded in **Ukkacelā S** (S 47.14/5:163-165; SA 3:225; J 1:391). (DA 2:554)

⁵⁹⁹ “**Cāpāla Shrine,**” *Cāpāla,cetiya*. The Ānguttara Comy says that during the first 20 years of the Buddha's ministry, he used to stay at the various shrines—the Cāpāla shrine, the Udena shrine, the shrine of Seven Mangos, the shrine of Many Sons, the Sāranda shrine [3.2]—mentioned here (AA 2:373). All these shrines were said to be beautiful spots (D 2:102 f, 118, 3:9; S 5:159, 260; A 4:309; U 62). They were tree shrines (*rukkha,cetiya*) where people sought refuge when they were in fear or where they prayed to have their wishes fulfilled (DhA 3:246). The Buddha has lived much of his life in the open and encourages his disciples to live the solitary forest life to expedite their spiritual practice. **The Cāpāla Shrine** was once the haunt of the yaksha Cāpāla, but later a residence (*vihāra*) was built there for the Buddha's use (UA 323). Faxian found a pagoda there and relates a story in connection with it (*Travels of Fa Hsien* [Foguoji:G], tr HA Giles, Cambridge, 1923:43). **The Udena Shrine**, on the east of Vesālī, was dedicated to the yaksha Udena (DA 2:554; UA 323). **The Gotamaka Shrine**, on the south of Vesālī (D 3:9), was dedicated to the yaksha Gotamaka (AA 2:373). It is here that the Buddha lays down the rule allowing the use of three robes (V 3:195): the three robes are used to keep the monks warm of cold days (V 1:288). **The Shrine of Seven Women** (*satt'ambaka cetiya*), to the west of Vesālī, was so called after seven princesses, the daughters of Kiki, king of Benares, experience religious urgency (*saṃvega*), left the palace and carried out spiritual practice here (UA 323). The **Vessantara J** (J 522) says king Kiki lived during the time of Kassapa Buddha (the just Buddha before ours) and that the women were reborn in our Buddha's time as Khemā, Uppalavaṇṇā, Paṭācārā, Gotamī, Dhamma,dinnā, Mahāmāyā and Visākhā (J 6:481). The word *ambakā* here means “woman” (V 1:232; D 2:96 in ref to Ambapālī [§2.16]; A 3:349) and is related to *ambā* (= *ammā*), “mother” (Abhp 244; Kaccv 115, Sadd 652, Moggv 2:63). **The Shrine of Many Sons** (*bahu,putta cetiya*), to the north of Vesālī, had a banyan tree with numerous branches, to which people who wanted to have children would come to pray for it (U 6.1/62 f; DA 2:102, 3:10; SA 5:259 f; UA 323). On the shrine (*cetiya*), see Intro (7.3).

⁶⁰⁰ “For the midday rest,” *diva,vihārāya*. The term *diva,vihāra*, lit “day residence” has sometimes been tr as “siesta” (D:W 246), but the word suggests that it is a time for a nap. The Buddha often speaks against monastics sleeping in the day time (D 3:185*; cf V 1:295). There are many references to monks and nuns resting in meditation during such a midday rest (S 1:128 f, 130, 131 f).

3.2 Then the Blessed One, having arrived at the Cāpāla Shrine, sat down on the prepared seat. Then the venerable Ānanda, having saluted the Blessed One, sat down at one side. When the venerable Ānanda was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One said this to him:

“Ānanda, delightful⁶⁰² is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena Shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine, delightful is the Satt’ambaka Shrine [of the Seven Women], delightful is the Bahu,puttaka Shrine [of Many Sons], delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine.⁶⁰³ [103]

The Buddha’s lifespan

3.3 Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the 4 bases of spiritual power,⁶⁰⁴ made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even,⁶⁰⁵ could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.⁶⁰⁶

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or the rest of a lifespan.⁶⁰⁷

3.4 But even though the venerable Ānanda was given such a clear sign by the Blessed One, though he was given such a broad hint, he was unable to understand it. He did not beseech the Blessed One, “Bhante, let the Blessed One stay on through the lifespan, let the Sugata [Wellfarer] stay on through the lifespan for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of gods and humans”—to that extent his mind was seized by Māra.⁶⁰⁸

3.5 For the second time, the Blessed One said this to him *dropping the same hint but Ānanda’s mind was seized by Māra*.

For the third time, the Blessed One said this to him:

“Ānanda, delightful is Vesālī, delightful is the Udena Shrine, delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine, delightful is the Satt’ambakā Shrine [of the Seven Women], delightful is the Bahu,puttaka Shrine [of Many Sons], delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine.

⁶⁰¹ “Followed...as he walked,” *piṭṭhito piṭṭhito anubandhi*. See §1.32 (D 2:89).

⁶⁰² “Delightful,” *ramaṇīyā*, alt tr “beautiful, charming.” This shows that the Buddha appreciates natural beauty, here def as any quality that conduces to mental peace, stability and clarity uninfluenced by greed, hate or delusion. See *Vedanā*, SD 3.2.

⁶⁰³ On each of these shrines, see §3.1n.

⁶⁰⁴ The 4 bases of spiritual power (*iddhi,pāda*;Skt *ṛddhi,pāda*): will or intention (*chanda*), energy or effort (*virīya*), consciousness or mind (*citta*) and mental investigation (*vīmaṃsa*) (D 3:77, D 3:213 = M1:103 = 2:11; D 3:221; Vbh 216). See **Intro (9.2.3)** & also Gethin 2001:94-97.

⁶⁰⁵ “Cultivated and developed...made very well even,” *bhāvītā bahulī,katā yāni,katā vatthu,katā anuṭṭhitā paricītā susam-āraddhā* (D 2:104 5 refs, 115-118 9 refs, 3:248 f 5 refs; S 1:116, 2:264 f 4 refs, 4:200, 5:170, 259 f 4 refs; A 3:290-292 5 refs, 4:300 2 refs, 309 3 refs; U 62 f 4 refs). All the terms are defined at Pm 1:172, here paraphrased: cultivated (*bhāvītā*): perfected by way of embracing dhyana, insight and path; developed (*bahulī,katā*): thoughts (*dhammā*) do not arise in excess; made them a vehicle (*yāni, katā*): his calm and insight is ever ready; made them the ground (*vatthu,katā*): mindfulness is well-established; attended to them (*anuṭṭhita*): able to guide his mind; reinforced them (*pari,citā*), lit well-accumulated: able to conquer bad mental states; made them well even (*susam-āraddha*), lit “making beauty arise”: overcoming defilements and attaining the goal. (Pm 3.173 f/1:172)

⁶⁰⁶ “For a lifespan...or for the rest of a lifespan,” *kappaṃ vā...kappāvasesam vā* (D 2:103; S 5:259; U 62; cf Kvu 45). On the Buddha’s lifespan, see **Intro (9.1+2)** & on the *kappa*, see **Intro (9.3)** above.

⁶⁰⁷ This lifespan extension is clearly different from the earlier one [§2.23], but see Intro (9).

⁶⁰⁸ *Yathā taṃ Mārena pariyuṭṭhita,citto*. Comys say that Māra is able to seize any mind that has not totally given up all mental perversions (*vipallāsa*), and Ānanda has not done so. Being a streamwinner, he is still subject to the perversion of perception (*saññā,vipallāsa*) and of mind (*citta,vipallāsa*), though not of views (*diṭṭhi,vipallāsa*). Māra seized his mind by displaying a terrifying form, and when the elder sees it he is unable to catch the hint dropped by the Buddha (DA 2:555 = SA 3:252). On the perversions, see **Satipaṭṭhāna Ss**, SD 13.1 (4.1a) & **Vipallāsa S** (A 4.49/2:52; Vism 22.68), SD 16.11.

Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even,⁶⁰⁹ could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of a lifespan.”

But even though the venerable Ānanda was given such a clear sign by the Blessed One, though he was given such a broad hint, he was unable [104] to understand it. He did not beseech the Blessed One, “Bhante, let the Blessed One stay on through the lifespan, let the Sugata [Wellfarer] stay on through the lifespan for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of gods and humans”—to that extent his mind was seized by Māra.

3.6 Then Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“You may go, Ānanda! Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”⁶¹⁰

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda answered the Blessed One. Having risen from his seat and saluted the Blessed One, keeping his right side to him, he sat down under one of the trees nearby.

Māra’s invitation

3.7 Then, not long after the venerable Ānanda had left, **Māra the bad one** went up to the Blessed One and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, Māra the bad one said this to the Blessed One:

3.7.2 (1) “Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.7.3 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One.⁶¹¹

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **monk disciples**⁶¹² who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,

3.7.4 who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;

⁶⁰⁹ “Cultivated and developed...made very well even,” *bhāvītā bahulī, katā yāni, katā vatthu, katā anuṭṭhitā paricitā susamāradhā* (D 2:104 5 refs, 115-118 9 refs, 3:248 f 5 refs; S 1:116, 2:264 f 4 refs, 4:200, 5:170, 259 f 4 refs; A 3:290-292 5 refs, 4:300 2 refs, 309 3 refs; U 62 f 4 refs). All the terms are defined at Pm 1:172, here paraphrased: **cultivated** (*bhāvītā*): perfected by way of embracing dhyana, insight and path; **developed** (*bahulī, katā*): thoughts (*dhammā*) do not arise in excess; **made them a vehicle** (*yani, katā*): his calm and insight is ever ready; **made them the ground** (*vatthu, katā*): mindfulness is well-established; **attended to them** (*anuṭṭhita*): able to guide his mind; **reinforced them** (*pari, citā*), lit well-accumulated: able to conquer bad mental states; **made them well even** (*susam-āradhā*), lit “making beauty arise”: overcoming defilements and attaining the goal. (Pm 3.173 f/ 1:172)

⁶¹⁰ *Yassa dāni tvam kalam maññasī ti*. This is stock: **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.101/1:85 @ SD 8.10), **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16, 3.6/2:104 @ SD 13), **Sekha S** (M 53.3/1:354 @ SD 21.2=14), **Kaṇṇaka-t, thala S** (M 90.17/2:132 f @ SD 10.8), **Puṇṇ’ovāda S** (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62, 31 @ SD 20.15), **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183, 15, 30), **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379, 29), **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/5:321, 16, 17) & **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348, 27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993:27-43.

⁶¹¹ Māra is here reminding of this declaration the Buddha has made during the 5th week after the Great Awakening while he was enjoying the bliss of awakening under the Goatheard’s Banyan tree: see S 4.24/1:122-124; A 5:46; J 1:78 f; DhA 3:195 f). It is interesting that this early conversation between the Buddha and Māra is not recorded elsewhere in the Nikāyas. See §3.34 below, where the Buddha relates this incident to Ānanda. On Māra’s attempts to prevent the Buddha from teaching, see **Brahma, nimantanika S** (M 49), SD 11.7(2a).

⁶¹² *Bhikkhū...sāvaka*. D:W renders this as “monks and disciples,” but it seems out of context. I take it as a tatpurusha (P *tappurisa* cpd: see Warder, *Introduction to Pali*, 1974:77 f), or more exactly a “split tatpurusha,” ie as *bhikkhu, sāvaka*, and also *bhikkhuṇī, sāvikā, upāsakā, sāvakā* and *upāsikā, sāvikā*. Following this, EM Hare’s alt tr is “till my monks (nuns, laymen, laywomen) shall be disciples...” (A:H 4:207 f ad A 4:310 f). If we accept Walshe’s tr, then “monks” (*bhikkhū*) here would refer to the “worldings,” that is, those still outside the path to awakening, while “disciples” (*sāvaka*) refers to those monks on the path, that is, one of the eight types of Saints. This categorization similarly applies to the other three pairs of “followers and disciples.” However, I think the context here refer only to the 4 types of noble saints (*ariya, sāvaka*)—ie the sainthood of the monastic and the lay—and not to the worldly Sangha or unawakened lay assembly. It is important to note here that the Buddha is clearly not referring to a statistical population, but a spiritual community of those who have gained the path.

3.7.5 until they shall be able, by reasonable means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.⁶¹³

3.8 But now, bhante, the monk disciples of the Blessed One *are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes,]*⁶¹⁴ *learned, bearers of the Dharma, [105] trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,*

3.8.2 *who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;*

3.8.3 *until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*

3.8.4 **(2)** Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.8.5 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

'Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **nun disciples** *who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes,] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,*

3.8.6 *who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;*

3.8.7 *until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*

3.8.8-10 But now, bhante, the nun disciples of the Blessed One *are accomplished, ...*

3.8.11 **(3)** Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.8.12 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

'Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **layman disciples** *who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes,] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,*

3.8.13 *who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;*

3.8.14 *until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*

3.8.15-17 But now, bhante, the layman disciples of the Blessed One *are accomplished, ...*

3.8.18 **(4)** Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.8.19 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

'Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **laywoman disciples** *who are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yoke,] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma,*

3.8.20 *who will pass on what they have gained from their own [106] teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear;*

3.8.21 *until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.'*

3.8.22-24 But now, bhante, the laywoman disciples of the Blessed One *are accomplished, ...*

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.8.25 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

⁶¹³ *Na tāvāhaṃ pāpima parinibbāyissāmi yāva me bhikkhū na sāvakā bhavissanti viyattā vinītā visāradā [patta,yoga-k,khemā]* bahu-s,sutā dhamma,dharā dhammānudhamma,paṭipannā sāmīci,paṭipannā anudhamma,cāriṇo, sakāṃ ācariya-kāṃ uggahetvā ācikkhissanti desessantī paññāpessanti paṭṭhapessanti vivarissanti vibhajissanti uttāni,karissanti, uppannam para-p,pavādaṃ saha dhammena suniggahitāṃ niggaḥetvā sappāṭihāriyaṃ dhammaṃ desessantī ti. *This phrase is omitted here but found in A 4:311.*

⁶¹⁴ *Patta,yoga-k,khemā*, found in D 3:125, A 4:311 & S 5:259 (1 MS, see S:W 5:232 n3) but omitted in D 2:104-106, S 5:261 f, U 63 f and Comy; cf A 2:8. See §3.36b & n.

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvāna as long as **this holy life** has not flourished, prospered, spread wide, well known to the many, spread amongst the masses, as long as it has not been well proclaimed amongst human beings.’

3.8.26 But now, bhante, the Blessed One’s holy life has flourished, prospered, spread wide, well known to the many, spread amongst the masses, and well proclaimed amongst human beings.⁶¹⁵

3.8.27 Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvāna! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvāna! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvāna!”

The Buddha relinquishes his lifespan

3.9 Then the Blessed One said this to Māra the bad one:

“Be at ease, bad one! It will not be long before the Tathāgata’s parinirvāna. With the passing of⁶¹⁶ 3 months from now, the Tathāgata shall enter parinirvāna.”⁶¹⁷ [§3.37]

3.10 Then the Blessed One, at the Cāpāla Shrine, mindfully and fully aware, **relinquished his life-formation**.⁶¹⁸ And when the Blessed One had relinquished his life-formation, there was a great earth-tremor, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth].⁶¹⁹

Then the Blessed [107] One, understanding the meaning of this, uttered this verse of uplift on that occasion:

The sage lets go of the formation of existence, of life [the remaining lifespan], low and high,
Delighting within and mentally concentrated, he broke the armour-like self-existence.⁶²⁰

The 8 causes of earth-tremors

3.11⁶²¹ Then this occurred to the venerable Ānanda: “It is wonderful indeed! It is marvellous indeed! What a great earth-tremor that was, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth]. What now is the reason, what is the cause for such a great earth-tremor to occur?”

⁶¹⁵ *Etarahi kho pana bhante bhagavato brahma, cariyam iddham c’eva phūtam ca vitthārikam bahu, jaññam puthu, bhūtam yāva-d-eva manussehi suppakāsitan ti* = U 64, 16-19, commented at UA 332-330. This passage is also at **Cāpāla Cetiya S** (S 51.10/5:262,9-14) & **Nagara S** (S 12.65/2:107,2-5 @ SD 14.2), where (in both cases) *etarahi kho pana bhante* is replaced by *tayidam bhikkhave*, and where SA parallels DA 2:554-558. The underscored phrase reads thus at D 16,3, S 12.65, S 51.10, & U 64; but vl & SA has *yāva deva, manussehi*, & Divy *deva, manusyebhyaḥ*. **Bodhi**: “I follow SA in its explanation of *yāva deva, manussehi suppakāsitan*. The point is that, despite the use of the instrumental form *-ehi*, the Dhamma is not proclaimed by devas and humans, but ‘throughout the region (inhabited) by devas and humans in the ten-thousandfold galaxy, within this extent it is well proclaimed, well taught, by the Tathāgata’ (*yāva dasa, sahassa, cakkavāḷe deva, manussehi paricchedo athi, etasmim antare suppakāsitan sudesitan tathāgatena*). It is possible *-ehi* here is a vestigial Eastern locative plural: see Geiger, *Pāli Grammar* §80.3.” (S:B 779 n182). Be that as it may, the Dharma is truly spread only when it is “well spread,” and as such this applies to “gods and men,” too. The life of the Dharma lies in its being well proclaimed and well realized, and well proclaimed by such beings. This is clear from this passage’s context in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** here.

⁶¹⁶ “With the passing of,” *accayena*: see (9.4.3) n ad loc..

⁶¹⁷ *Apposukko tvam pāpima hohi, na ciram tathāgatassa parinibbānam bhavissati, ito tiñṇam māsānam accayena tathāgato parinibbāyissatī ti*. On the question whether the Buddha passes away on Vesak Day, see (9.4) above. On *apposukka*, see SD 49.8a (2.3.6.4).

⁶¹⁸ “Life-formation” (*āyu, saṅkhāra*; elsewhere *jīvita, saṅkhāra*) (M 1:295, 296; S 2:266; J 4:215). Cf §2.23 where the Buddha willfully extends his life. See S:B 819 n366. See (9.2) on the Buddha’s lifespan, (9.3) on *kappa*, & (9.6): Did the Buddha commit suicide?

⁶¹⁹ A similar phenomenon (*dhamma, niyāma*) follows immediately after the Buddha passes into parinirvāna [§6.10].

⁶²⁰ *Tulam atulam ca sambhavam bhava, saṅkhāram avassajī munī | Ajjhata, rato samāhito abhida kavacam iv’atta, sambhavam*. This difficult stanza has the same comy—SA 3:254 f = DA 2:557 f = AA 4:153 f = UA 329 f—that offer two alternative explanations: one taking *tulam* and *atulam* as contrasted opposites, the other taking *tulam* as a present participle and *atulam* and *sambhavam* as the contrasted opposited. Cf Sn 85b where *atulyo* describes a teacher of the path (*magg’akkhāyī*), probably the Buddha; Sn 683a, where it is used to qualify the Bodhisattva; Thī 201a *atuliyam* describes the *akampitām dhammā*, “the unshakable state,” presumably nirvana. Cf U 6.1; S 5:263; Divy 203. **Nettipakarāṇa** takes *tulam* as the *saṅkhāra, dhātu* (the totality of conditioned things), and *atulam* as the *nibbāna, dhātu* (Nett 61): on the 2 elements (*dhātu*) of nirvana, see It 2.2.7/38. See Bhikkhu important and detailed n, S:B 1941 n255.

⁶²¹ The previous episode (the relinquishment of the Buddha’s lifespan) [§§3.1-10] and this episode on earth-tremors (*bhūmi, cāla*) [3.1-20] are found in **Bhūmi, cāla S** (A 8.70/4:308-313) and in **Ekōttar’āgama 42.5** (T125.753c11-754a11). In his tr, Rhys Davids makes this n: “The narrative is now interrupted by the insertion of paragraphs which at first sight seem to be quite out of place. But the connexion, or want of connexion, between them and the main story is very suggestive as to the way in which the Suttanta was put together. The whole chapter is an answer to a possible objection, either from outsiders or from weaker members of the fold, that if the Buddha were really so great why did he die at all. The suggested

3.12 Then the venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful indeed! It is marvellous indeed! What a great earth-tremor that was, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth]. What now is the reason, what is the cause [condition], for such a great earth-tremor?”

3.13 “Ānanda, there are **these 8 reasons and conditions for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor**. What are the eight?

(1) Here, Ānanda, the great earth rests on water; the water on wind; the wind on space. And when the mighty wind moves, it disturbs the water, and through the disturbance of the water, the earth trembles.⁶²²

This, [108] Ānanda, is the first reason, the first condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.14 (2) Furthermore, Ānanda, a recluse or brahmin of great power, accomplished in mental powers, or a devata of great power and great glory, but whose earth-consciousness is weakly developed, but his water-consciousness is immeasurable, and he makes the earth shudder and shake violently.

This, Ānanda, is the second reason, the second condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.15 (3) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Bodhisattva, having left Tusita heaven and, mindfully and fully aware, descends into the mother’s womb, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.

This, Ānanda, is the third reason, the third condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.16 (4) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Bodhisattva, mindfully and fully aware, leaves the mother’s womb, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.⁶²³

This, Ānanda, is the fourth reason, the fourth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.17 (5) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata awakens to the supreme full self-awakening, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.⁶²⁴

This, Ānanda, is the fifth reason, the fifth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.18 (6) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata turns the peerless Wheel of Truth, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.⁶²⁵

This, Ānanda, is the sixth reason, the sixth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.19 (7) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata, mindfully and fully aware, relinquishes the life-formation, this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.

This, Ānanda, is the seventh reason, the seventh condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.

3.20 (8) Furthermore, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata enters into parinirvana, [109] the nirvana-element without residue,⁶²⁶ this earth shudders, trembles and shakes.⁶²⁷

answer is that he could have lived on if he had so wished; but he did not wish because he had certain kinds of power and insight and self-mastery which prevented him from doing so. For the purpose of this answer these paragraphs, already in existence among the Suttas current in the community, and dealing with these powers, are here repeated without any such connecting argument as we should find under similar circumstances, in a modern (written) book of apologetics. The argument suggested by them follows exactly the same lines as that in **the Mahāli S...**” (D:RD 2:113 n3; emphasis added).

The Madhyam’āgama (MĀ 36 = T26.477b21-478b12), **the Mūlasarvāstivādin** version (22, 1-23, 8) and **the Tibetan Dulva** (f 573^a-577^a = Rockhill 1884:132 f) mention only 3 natural causes of an earth-tremor. It is here, according to the Dulva, that the Buddha teaches “**the three great references**” (f 573^a-577^a) “but it is more developed than the Pāli version, and gives many more rules” (Rockhill 1884:132 n1). The 4 great references are at §4.7 below. The 8 causes of an earth-tremor is found in all versions, and as such most likely forms an original part of the sutta, but is a borrowing from **Bhūmi, cālā S** (A 8.70). However, the set of 3 causes (due to its number) is probably much older. Whether these earth-tremors actually occurred or not, it is more important to understand their significance: they are “a literary device of showing that the Buddha’s abandoning of his will to live on affects the entire cosmos, not only the human world” (Ray 1994:51). In fact, “all the events of Buddha accompanying an earth-tremor have a religious meaning which is more important than mere historical or biographical part to which they are related” (Pye 1979:106). See An Yang-Gyu 2001:59-64. On **Bhūmi, cālā S** (D 16,3.-11-20), see Ciurtin 2012.

⁶²² This clearly refers to what we today call the tectonic movements of the earth, causing earth-tremors or earth-quakes.

⁶²³ This refers to the Nativity, that is, when the Bodhisattva is born at Lumbinī (J 1:52).

⁶²⁴ This refers to the great awakening at Buddha, gayā (J 1:76). See **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,18/1:167), SD 1.11.

⁶²⁵ This refers to teaching of the First Discourse at the Deer Park, Isipatana (V 1:10-12; S 56.11/5:420-424; DA 1:2; J 1:92). See **Dhamma, cakka-p, pavattana S**, SD 1.1.

⁶²⁶ *Anupādi.sesa, nibbāna, dhātu*: see (15).

This, Ānanda, is the eighth reason, the eighth condition, for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor. These, Ānanda, are the eight reasons and conditions for the occurrence of a great earth-tremor.⁶²⁸

The 8 assemblies

3.21 ⁶²⁹Now, Ānanda, there are these **8 assemblies**?
What are the eight?⁶³⁰

- (1) The kshatriya [noble class] assembly,
- (2) the brahmin [priestly] assembly,
- (3) the householder assembly,
- (4) the recluse assembly,
- (5) the assembly of the 4 great kings,
- (6) the assembly of the 32 gods,
- (7) Māra's assembly, and
- (8) the host of brahmās.

3.22 Ānanda, I recall having approached a kshatriya assembly of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then,⁶³¹ so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

But even as I was speaking, they knew me not, wondering, 'Who could this be who speaks? A deva or a human?'

And having instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk, I disappeared. And when I have disappeared, they wondered, 'Who is this who has disappeared? A deva or a human?'

3.23 Ānanda, I recall having approached a brahmin assembly of many hundreds, *of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk*

Ānanda, I recall having approached a recluse assembly, *of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk*

Ānanda, I recall having approached an assembly of the 4 great kings, *of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk*

Ānanda, I recall having approached an assembly of the 32 gods, *of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk*

Ānanda, I recall having approached Māra's assembly, *of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so*

⁶²⁷ According to Tibetan beliefs (based on the early Buddhist teachings on the primary elements), in a dying person, the "earth element" dissolves first (the body loses strength), then the "water element" dissolves (loss of control of bodily fluids), then the fire element dissolves (mouth and nose dry up; body loses warmth), and then the air element dissolves (difficulty in breathing). See for example Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, 1994:251-253.

⁶²⁸ **Milinda,pañha** (Miln 113-119) discusses the *ninth* cause of a great earth-tremor, ie, when Vessantara made his great offering and the earth shook seven times (J 1:74, 547). Nāgasena actually evades the answer by recounting Vessantara's virtues. This question, I think, can be resolved by the fact that the 8 causes of a great earth-tremor form a canonical list while the Vessantara J is commentarial.

⁶²⁹ Foll §§3.21-23 also in **Parisā S** (A 8.69/4:307 f) and nearly identical to a passage in **Maha Sīhanāda S** (M 12,29/-1:72). A Skt counterpart is at S 360 folio 179R3 in Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, Berlin, 1950:22). Apparently, the passage on the "8 causes of earth-tremors" attracted 3 more "eights" [§§3.21-33], directly connected with the teaching. These passages have been interpolated here apparently because such vital teachings reflect the urgency of the moment.

⁶³⁰ For an evidently older listing, see **Dhammaññū S** (A 7.64,9/4:116), SD 30.10. Also at **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,29), SD 49.1.

⁶³¹ "Then," *tattha*, lit "in that place."

was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk

Ānanda, I recall having approached an assembly of brahmas of many hundreds, assembled with them before, and conversed with them before, and engaged in discussion with them before. Whatever their colour was then, so was my colour, too. Whatever was their voice then, so was my voice, too. I instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk.

But even as I was speaking, they knew me not, wondering, ‘Who could this be who speaks? A deva or a human?’ [110]

And having instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened them with Dharma talk, I disappeared. And when I have disappeared, they wondered, ‘Who is this who has disappeared? A deva or a human?’

These, Ānanda, are the 8 assemblies.⁶³²

The 8 bases for mastery

3.24 Ānanda, there are these **8 bases for mastery**.⁶³³

What are the eight?

3.25 (1) Perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], limited, beautiful or ugly.⁶³⁴ By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the first base for mastery.

3.26 (2) Perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally [in another], immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the second base for mastery.

3.27 (3) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms *externally* [in another], limited, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the third base for mastery.

3.28 (4) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms *externally* [in another], immeasurable, beautiful or ugly. By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the fourth base for mastery.

3.29 (5) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms *externally*, that are blue [indigo], of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow.⁶³⁵

Just as a flax flower⁶³⁶ that is blue, of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothened on both sides, that is blue, blue in appearance, with a blue glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, blue, of blue colour, blue in appearance, with a blue glow.

⁶³² This teaching here concerns Buddhist missiology, the discipline and art of teaching and spreading the Buddha word. From the Buddha’s statement here, it is clear that he is capable of blending with the crowd and effectively communicating with his listeners at their level. Cf the 6 qualities of an ideal Dharma speaker given in **Alaṅ S** (A 4:296-299), **Udayī S** (A 3:184) and Piya Tan, *The Teaching Methods of the Buddha*, 2001 (unpublished MS):

<http://pali.house.googlepages.com/TeachingMethodsoftheBuddha.pdf>. Also to be seen here are the roots of an omnipresent and protean Buddha or Mahāyāna Bodhisattva ideal.

⁶³³ “Bases of mastery” or “spheres of transcendence” (*abhibh’āyatana*, Skt *abhibhv-āyatana* = *abhibhū + āyatana*; ie, powers gained through *kaśīna* (Skt *krtsna*) meditation as means of transcending the sense-sphere. Listed in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.24), SD 9; **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.3.1(10)); **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77,72, SD 49.5; **Parihāna Dhamma S** (S 35.96), SD 91.12; **Abhibh’āyatana S** (A 8.65/4:305 f); **Sammāvattana S** (A 8.90/349); **Nm** 143; **Dhs** §§235-247; DhsA 191). In **S 35.96**, the term is applied to 6 “mastered bases” (*cha abhibh’āyatanaṇi*) and refers to the mastery of the senses: when a sense-object impinges on the sense-base, “there do not arise in him bad unwholesome states, nor any memories and intentions connected with the mental fetters” (S 35.96/4:76 f). See *Buddhist Dictionary*: *abhibhāyatana* & *Ency Bsm*, sv; also Shaw, *Buddhist Meditation*, 2006: 93.

⁶³⁴ *Ajjhattam rūpa,saññī eko bahiddhā,rūpāni passati parittāni suvaṇṇa,dubbaṇṇāni*.

⁶³⁵ On blue (*nīla*) *kaśīna*, and yellow (*pīta*), copper-red (*lohita*) and white (*odāta*), see **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.1(9.2).

⁶³⁶ *Ummā,puppha*, *Linum usitatissimum*, a plant of the family Linaceae. It is a herbaceous annual, when densely planted for fibre, averages 3-4 ft (0.9-1.2 m) in height, with slender stalks, and with branches concentrated at the top. The flowers, born on stems growing from branch tips, have five petals, usu blue in colour but sometimes white or pink. The Pali *nīla* refers to colours ranging from blue, dark-blue, green, dark green, blue-green, grey, blue-black, and sometimes black (as in the case of huma hair, DhsA 190); in meditation, however, it refers to the indigo or dark-blue of the linseed or flax flower (*ummā puppha*) (V 4:120; D 16,3.29/2:110; M 2:13 = A 5:61; Ap 258; Tha 1068): see PED: *ummā* & CPD: *ummā-puppha*. <http://dharmafarer.org>

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the fifth base for mastery. [111]

3.30 (6) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are yellow, of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow.

Just as a cassia⁶³⁷ flower that is yellow, of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothed on both sides, that is yellow, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, yellow, of yellow colour, yellow in appearance, with a yellow glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the sixth base for mastery.

3.31 (7) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are red [copper-red], of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow.

Just as a hibiscus⁶³⁸ flower that is red, of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothed on both sides, that is red, red in appearance, with a red glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, red, of red colour, red in appearance, with a red glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the seventh base for mastery.

3.32 (8) Not perceiving forms internally [within oneself], one sees forms externally, that are white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow.

Just as the morning star⁶³⁹ that is white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow; or just like Benares cloth smoothed on both sides, that is white, white in appearance, with a white glow; even so, not perceiving forms internally, one seeks forms externally, white, of white colour, white in appearance, with a white glow.

By mastering [transcending] them, one perceives thus, ‘I know, I see.’

This is the eighth base for mastery.

These, Ānanda, are the 8 bases for mastery.



Kañnikāra (Cassia, Pudding Pipe, Golden Shower, Kinihirimal) with yellow flowers



Hibiscus (*bandhu, jīvika*)

⁶³⁷ “Cassia,” *kañnikāra* or *kañikāra* (Skt *karnikāra*) (PED: *Pterospermum acerifolium*, but this is not the cassia tree), the tree (J 5:295, 420, 422, 6:269; Ap 167, 183; B 17.19; Mahv 73.123), or *~puppha*, its flower (D 3:111 = M 2:14 = A 5:61; J 2:25; Vism 173). The *karnikāra*, also called cassia, pudding-pipe, golden shower tree, or kinihirimal in Sinhalese, has long drooping pods and large racemes or clusters of star-shaped yellow flowers. It is often featured in ancient Indian literature, such as the *Buddha, carita*. Almost every part of the cassia tree is useful. The leafy shoots are cut and steamed as a fresh vegetable. The leaves steeped in water provide a laxative tea, or ground into a paste soothe skin irritations, and 4 grams of the sticky black seeds boiled in salted water drunk before bedtime is said to relieve “heart congestion.” Its bark when macerated becomes a good leather cleaner. This beautiful tall hardwood is also used in construction, and is so durable that it can be made into the spokes of wheels and handles for plows. Indians often plant a *karnikāra* for each child born to the family as an investment for their future, but also as a kind of sympathetic magic, that the child would grow tall and strong like the tree.

⁶³⁸ *Bandhu, jīvika* (PED: *Pentapetes phœnicea*, but prob *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*) (D 2:111; M 2:14; J 4:179; Vism 174; VvA 43, 161; DhsA 14). The hibiscus or red hibiscus, belongs to the Malvaceae family (a large group of dicotyledonous flowering plants), and is also called Chinese hibiscus or “shoe flower.” The Sinhalese call it *bandu*. It is a shrub common in tropical Asia, now widely planted, frequently as a hedge. When crushed, the red flowers turn black, yielding a dark purplish dye that is used in India for blackening shoes. In China, the dye is used for the hair and eyebrows. It is also used to color liquor and to dye paper a bluish purple tint that reacts with litmus. Hawaiians eat raw flowers to aid digestion; the Chinese pickle and eat them.

⁶³⁹ *Osadhī, tāra*, lit “the medicine star” (D 2:111; M 2:14; S 1:65; J 1:23). Also tr as “the star of healing.” *Osadhīsa* is the moon (Abhp 52; Sadd 380), which Indian mythology regards as the lord of healing. DPL says this is Venus (but without evidence).

The 8 liberations

3.33 Ānanda, there are these 8 liberations.⁶⁴⁰

What are the eight?

(1) One with physical form sees physical forms.⁶⁴¹

This is the first liberation. [112]

(2) One does not see physical forms internally, but sees physical forms externally.⁶⁴²

This is the second liberation.

(3) One is liberated after contemplating the idea of the beautiful.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴⁰ “**The 8 liberations**” (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*, Skt *aṣṭa, vimokṣā*, D 2:70 f, 111 f, 3:262, 288; A 4:306, 349). The first 3 liberations are *kaṣiṇa* meditations, expl in some detail in **Mahā Sakuludāyī S** (M 77,23/2:13), but in greater detail in **Paṭisambhidā, magga** (Pm 2:38-40). Comy on **Mahā Sakuludāyī S** (M 77,22/2:13) says that these liberations (*vimokkhā*) are the mind’s full (but temporary) release from the opposing states and its full (but temporary) release by delighting in the object (MA 3:255, cf 255-259).

Liberations 1-3 have to do with the “bases for mastery” (*abhibh’āyatanā*) [§§3.24-32]; liberations 4-7 are the dhyanas; and the last is the cessation of perception and feeling (*nirodha, samāpatti*). The 8 liberations are as follows:

(1) **The 1st liberation** is that of one with physical form sees physical forms (*rūpī rūpāni passati*). This liberation is the attainment of the 4 dhyanas using a *kaṣiṇa* (meditation device) derived from a coloured object on one’s own body. Perceiving form in one’s own body, one sees forms externally. This is said in connection with *kaṣiṇa* meditation and is one of the “bases for mastery” (*abhibhāyatana*), ie, powers gained through *kaṣiṇa* meditation as means of transcending the sense-sphere; see D 2:110; M 77/2:13; A 8.675/4:305, 10.29/6:61. MA explains that the meditator does the preliminary exercise (*parikamma*) on an internal form (in one’s own body), for example, the blue of the eyes for a blue *kaṣiṇa*, the skin for a yellow *kaṣiṇa*, the blood for a red *kaṣiṇa*, the teeth for a white *kaṣiṇa*, but the concentration sign (*nimitta*) arises externally (MA 3:258 f). The “transcending” (*abhibhāyatana*) of the forms is the attainment of absorption together with the arising of the sign. On emerging from the absorption, he considers, “I know, I see.”

(2) **The 2nd liberation** is that of one who does not see physical form internally, but sees physical forms externally (*ajjhataṃ arūpa, saññī bahiddhā rūpāni passati*). This second liberation is the attainment of dhyana using a *kaṣiṇa* derived from an external object and the arising of the concentration sign externally. The formulation of the second *vimokkha* “suggests that it is a shorthand for all the eight *abhibhāyatanas* which consist of variations on the theme *ajjhataṃ arūpa-saññī eko bahiddhā rūpāni passati*” (Gethin 2002:267 n7).

(3) **The 3rd liberation** is that of one liberated after contemplating the idea of the beautiful (*‘subhan’ t’eva adhimutto hoti*). *Subha* (“beautiful”) here refers to the perception of either a very pure and beautiful coloured *kaṣiṇa* or the 4 *brahma, vihāra*. This is said in reference to the attainment of form absorption (*rūpa jhāna*) by means of concentrating the mind on very pure, bright and beautiful colours as the *kaṣiṇa*-object. **Paṭisambhidā, magga** says that this mental state is also produced through the cultivation of the divine abodes (*brahma, vihāra*), as a result of which all beings appear perfectly pure and glorious, and thus the mind turns to the beautiful (Pm 5.20/2:39).

These first three are said in connection with *kaṣiṇa* meditation by way of the “bases of mastery” or “bases for transcendence” (*abhibhāyatana*), ie, one of the 8 stages of mastery over the senses through absorption. See Mahā Parinibbāna S (D 16,3.24/2:110), **Mahā Sakuludāyī S** (M 77,22/2:13); **Abhibhāyatana S** (A 8.65/4:305), **Kosala S** (A 10.29/5:61). **Dhamma, saṅgaṇī** apparently regards the *abhibh’āyatanā* as being “concerned with the mastery and facility in certain aspects of *jhāna* practice” (Gethin, 2001:267). See Dhs 45-52 where the 8 *abhibhāyatanā* (with slight variations from the Nikāya formulation) are treated as an aspect of *jhāna* that is of the form realm (*rūpāvacara*); cf DhsA 187-190.

The next four (4-7) are the formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*):

(4) The base of the infinity of space.

(5) The base of the infinity of consciousness.

(6) The base of nothingness.

(7) The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

(8) The cessation of perception and feeling. This last stage requires both concentration and insight, and can be attained only by non-returners and arhats who have mastered the formless attainments. See Bodhi, *The Great Discourse on Causation* [Mahā, nidāna Sutta tr & exegeses]. Kandy: BPS, 1984:47-51.

See discussion in **Maha Nidāna S** (D 15,35/2:70 f), SD 5.17 (10). See also Analayo 2009: 141-148.

⁶⁴¹ *Rūpī rūpāni passati*. This first liberation refers to the attainment of the 4 dhyanas using a *kaṣiṇa* (meditation device) derived from a coloured object on one’s own body. See §3.33 n on “the 8 liberations.”

⁶⁴² *Ajjhataṃ arūpa, saññī bahiddhā rūpāni passati*. This second liberation is the attainment of dhyana using a *kaṣiṇa* derived from an external object and the arising of the concentration sign externally. See §3.33 n on “the 8 liberations.”

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This is the third liberation.

(4) Through the utter transcending of the perception of physical forms, the passing away of the perception of impingement [sense-contact], and non-attention to the perception of diversity, (contemplating,) ‘Space is infinite,’ one enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of space.

This is the fourth liberation.

(5) Through the utter transcending of the infinity of space, (contemplating,) ‘Consciousness is infinite,’ one enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of consciousness.

This is the fifth liberation.

(6) Through the utter transcending of the base of the infinity of consciousness, (contemplating,) ‘There is nothing,’ one enters and dwells in the base of nothingness.

This is the sixth liberation.

(7) Through the utter transcending of the base of nothingness, one enters and dwells in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

This is the seventh liberation.

(8) Through the utter transcending of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one enters and dwells in the cessation of perception and feeling.⁶⁴⁴

This is the eighth liberation.

These, Ānanda, are the eight liberations.

Ānanda is told of Māra’s visits

3.34 ^{645c} Ānanda, once, when I had just attained the supreme self-awakening, I stayed under the Goatherd’s Banyan Tree on the bank of the river Nerañjarā at Uruvelā. Then Māra the Bad One came to me, stood at one side and said:

‘May the Blessed One now attain parinirvana, may the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana. Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana.’

3.35 Then I said to Māra:

‘Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **monk disciples**⁶⁴⁶ who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, [113] establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **nun disciples** who are accomplished trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **layman disciples** who are accomplished trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **laywoman disciples** who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it,

⁶⁴³ ‘Subhan’t’eva adhimutto hoti. This third liberation refers to the attainment of the perception of either a very pure, bright and beautiful (*subha*) coloured *kaṣiṇa* or of the 4 *brahma, vihārā*. See §3.33 n on “the 8 liberations” & Analayo 2009: 146 f.

⁶⁴⁴ “The cessation of perception and feeling,” *saññā, vedayita nirodha*. This anomalous state, fully described in **Visuddhi, magga** (Vism 23.16-52/702-709), is a combination of deep meditative calm and insight where all mental states temporarily shut down (Vism 23.43/707 f): see **Sappurisa S** (M 113), SD 23.7 (2); **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43), SD 30.2 (3).

⁶⁴⁵ After the interpolation of the doctrines of 8’s, the narrative resumes here from §3.10. The following sections [§§3.34-42]—the Buddha tells Ānanda about Māra’s visits in the past and present; the parinirvana in 3 months’ time; Ānanda’s belated invitation and rebuke by the Buddha—are all unique to this Sutta.

⁶⁴⁶ *Bhikkhū...sāvaka*. On the analyses of this word and the other 3 key words here, see above §3.7a n.

establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.’

3.36 And today itself, Ānanda, just now, Māra the bad one approached me at the Cāpāla Shrine. Having approached me, Māra the bad one stood one said. Standing thus at one side, Māra the bad one said this:

3.36.2 ‘Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana! For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until [114] I have **monk disciples** who are accomplished, *trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*”

But now, bhante, the monk disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yokes,]⁶⁴⁷ learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.3 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **nun disciples** who are accomplished, *trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*”

But now, bhante, the nun disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One’s parinirvana!

3.36.4 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **layman disciples** who are accomplished, *trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*”

But now, bhante, the layman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.

⁶⁴⁷ *Patta,yoga-k,khemā*, found in D 3:125, A 4:311 & S 5:259 (1 MS, see S:W 5:232 n3) but omitted in D 2:104-106, S 5:261 f, U 63 f and Comy; cf A 2:8. *Yogā* = *oghā* (floods) = *āsavā* (mental influxes). The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as influxes, taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, bad (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists four *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16,2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These four are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [§43] is probably older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhatship. See BDict under *āsava*..

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.36.5 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana until I have **laywoman disciples** who are accomplished, *trained, skilled, [have found safety from the yoke,] learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.*”

But now, bhante, the laywoman disciples of the Blessed One are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, bearers of the Dharma, trained in accordance with the Dharma, correctly trained and walking the path of the Dharma, who will pass on what they have gained from their own teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyse it, make it clear; until they shall be able, by means of the Dharma, to refute outside teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dharma in all its wonder.”

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.36.6 For, bhante, these are the words spoken by the Blessed One:

“Bad One, I shall not enter parinirvana as long as **this holy life** has not flourished, prospered, widespread, well known to the masses, widely spread, as long as it has not been well proclaimed amongst human beings.”

But now, bhante, the Blessed One's holy life has flourished, prospered, widespread, well known to the masses, widely spread, as long as it has been well proclaimed amongst human beings.

Bhante, may the Blessed One now attain parinirvana! May the Sugata [Well-farer] now attain parinirvana! Now is the time for the Blessed One's parinirvana!

3.37 Ānanda, when this was spoken, I said thus to Māra the bad one:

‘Be at ease, bad one! It will not be long before the Tathāgata's parinirvana. With the passing of 3 months from now, the Tathāgata shall enter parinirvana.’ [§3.9]

Then, Ānanda, the Blessed One, right here at the Cāpāla Shrine, mindfully and fully aware, relinquished his life-formation.” [115]

Ānanda beseeches the Buddha

3.38 When this was spoken the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!”

“Enough, Ānanda, do not beseech the Tathāgata. This is not the time for beseeching the Tathāgata.”

3.39 For the second time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One, *beseeching the Blessed One....*

For the third time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!”

“Ānanda, do you have faith in the Blessed One's awakening?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Then, Ānanda, why do you press [trouble] the Tathāgata up to three times?”

3.40 “But, bhante, I have heard from the mouth of Blessed One himself, I have understood from the mouth of the Blessed One himself, that whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power,⁶⁴⁸ made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.”

“Ānanda, do you have faith in the Blessed One's awakening?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Then, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault, that when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One.”⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁸ See §3.3n.

⁶⁴⁹ One might ask here: why does the Buddha need to throw a broad hint to Ānanda regarding the Buddha's ability to extend his lifespan? Why not the Buddha himself simply live out his full life-span for the benefit of all beings? There are two possible answers. The first is that the Buddha does not really need to live out his full life-span as the fourfold community has been established: his work is done. The “broad hint” is a bonus that Ānanda fails to accept. But the second

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have refused you twice, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

Ānanda’s “failures” at Rājagaha

3.41 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling on Mount Vulture Peak near Rājagaha. There too, Ānanda, I addressed you,⁶⁵⁰ [116]

‘Delightful is Rājagaha, Ānanda, delightful is Mount Vulture Peak.’⁶⁵¹

Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

3.42 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling in the (Gotama) Banyan Park near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at Cora Papāta [Robbers’ Cliff] near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling in Satta,pannī Guha [the Cave of the Seven Leaves] in Vebhāra Passa [Vebhāra Rock] near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at Kāla Sila [the Black Rock] on the Isigili slope near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling in the hill cave at Sappa,sondika [the Snake Pool] in Sīta,vana [the Cool Forest] near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at the Tapodā Park near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at the Kalandaka Nivāpa [the squirrels’ feeding-ground] in Veḷu,vana [the Bamboo Grove] near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at Jīvaka Amba,vana [Jīvaka’s mango grove] near that very same Rājagaha....

...I was dwelling at the Deer Park in Madda,kucchi [Belly Crunch]⁶⁵² near that very same Rājagaha....

3.43 ⁶⁵³Now there, too, Ānanda, I addressed you,

‘Delightful, Ānanda, is Rājagaha...’

Delightful is Mount Vulture Peak...

Delightful is the Gotama Banyan (Park)...

Delightful is Robbers’ Cliff...

Delightful is the Cave of the Seven Leaves in Vebhāra Rock...

reason is more likely: this curious episode was interpolated some time before the Canon was closed and does not form a vital part of the sutta. Whether the Buddha lives on or not, he would eventually have to pass into parinirvana.

⁶⁵⁰ This is the first of 16 such occasions [§§3.41-47]! The rest follow hereon. **See Intro (9.2)** above.

⁶⁵¹ Cf §3.2 on the delightful Cāpāla Shrine and others.

⁶⁵² At the foot of Mount Vulture Peak (V 2:193 f; DhA 2:164 ff; J 4:430; Miln 179). It was here, Comys say, the queen of Bimbisāra, and mother of Ajātasattu, tried to abort the latter on learning that he would in due course kill his own father. She went to the park and violently massaged (*madda*, “crushed”) her belly (*kucchi*) hoping of bringing about a miscarriage but failed (SA 1:77; cf J 3:121 f).

⁶⁵³ This [§3.43] is qu at Kvu 559.

Delightful is the Black Rock on the slope of Isigili...
 Delightful is the Snake Pool in Cool Forest... [117]
 Delightful is Tapodā Park...
 Delightful is the squirrels' feeding-ground in the Bamboo Grove...
 Delightful is Jīvaka's mango grove...
 Delightful is the Deer Park in Madda,kucchi....

3.44 ⁶⁵⁴Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.'

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

'Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!'

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

Ānanda's "failures" at Vesālī

3.45 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here in the Udena Shrine near Vesālī.

Now there, too, Ānanda, I addressed you,

'Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī. Delightful is the Udena Shrine.

Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.'

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

'Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!'

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault. [118]

3.46 Once, Ānanda, I was dwelling right here at the Gotamaka Cetiya near Vesālī ...

... I was dwelling right here at the Satt'ambā Cetiya [the Shrine of the Seven Women] near Vesālī ...

... I was dwelling right here at the Bahu.puttā Cetiya [the Shrine of Many Children] near Vesālī ...

... I was dwelling right here at the Sāradanda Cetiya near Vesālī ...

3.47 And today, Ānanda, right here at the Cāpāla Shrine, I addressed you,

'Delightful, Ānanda, is Vesālī ...

Delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine ...

Delightful is the Gotamaka Shrine ...

Delightful is the Shrine of the Seven Women ...

Delightful is the Shrine of Many Children ...

Delightful is the Sāradanda Shrine ...

Delightful is the Cāpāla Shrine ...

⁶⁵⁴ The following sections [§§3.44-51]—the rebuke of Ānanda (continued); the hall of the gabled house; the parinirvana in 3 months' time announced—are all unique to this Sutta.

Ānanda, whoever has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, the Tathāgata is one who has cultivated and developed the four bases of spiritual power, made them a vehicle, made them the ground, attended to them, reinforced them, and made them well even, could, if he so wishes, remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.

Ānanda, if the Tathāgata so wishes, he could remain for the life-span or for the rest of the lifespan.’

Then, Ānanda, even when you were given a broad hint, when you were given a clear sign, you did not beseech the Blessed One (then):

‘Bhante, may the Blessed One live out the lifespan! May the Sugata [Wellfarer] live out for the lifespan, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!’

If, Ānanda, you had asked the Blessed One, he might have twice refused you, but the third time, he would have consented. Therefore, Ānanda, yours is the wrongdoing; yours is the fault.

3.48 Ānanda, have I not told you before: **All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]?⁶⁵⁵ What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.⁶⁵⁶**

Ānanda, it has been given up, rejected, thrown away, abandoned, forsaken by the Tathāgata, that is, the life-formation has been relinquished. This is spoken by the Tathāgata with absolute certainty:

‘In no long time, the Tathāgata will attain [119] parinirvana. The Tathāgata will attain parinirvana in three months’ time.’

That the Tathāgata should go back on his word for the sake of life [living on]—that is impossible.

Come now, Ānanda, let us go to Kūṭ’āgāra Sālā [the hall of the gabled house] in Mahā,vana [the Great Wood].”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

MAHĀ,VANA

That the teachings may endure

3.49 ⁶⁵⁷Then the Blessed One, along with the venerable Ānanda, went **to the hall of the gabled house**⁶⁵⁸ in Mahāvana [the Great Wood]. Having reached there, he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, go to all the monks living in dependence on Rājagaha. Have them all gather in the assembly hall.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One and then he had all the monks living in dependence of Rājagaha to gather in the assembly hall. Then he approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, he said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the order of monks is assembled. Bhante, now is the time for the Blessed One to do as he thinks fit.”

3.50 Then the Blessed One, along with the venerable Ānanda, went to the hall of the gabled house in the Great Wood. Having reached there, he sat down on the prepared seat. Thus seated down, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

The 7 sets of teachings

⁶⁵⁵ This famous sentence is stock: D 2:118=114=158=163; **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 2:192=194); **Cunda S** (S 5:163); Nm 1:123 qu D 16,5.14/2:144. Cf **Abhiṅga.paccavekhittaba S** (A 3:74).

⁶⁵⁶ *Na nu evaṃ Ānanda mayā paṭigacc’eva akkhātāṃ, sabbeḥ’eva piyehi manāpehi nānā,bhāvo vinā,bhāvo aññathā,bhāvo? Taṃ kut’ettha Ānanda labbhā? Yaṃ taṃ jātaṃ bhūtaṃ saṅkhātāṃ paloka,dhammaṃ taṃ vata mā palujjī ti n’etaṃ thānaṃ vijjati.* This quote is stock: **D 16** §3.48/2:118 = §5.14/144 = §6.11.1/158 = §6.20/163. The sentence, *Taṃ kut’ettha Ānanda labbhā?* lit tr “What can you get here, Ānanda?” As at §§5.6, 6.11 below.

⁶⁵⁷ The events of this section [§3.49] are expanded in **Kaliṅgara S** (S 20.8/2:267 f).

⁶⁵⁸ “The hall of the gabled house,” or simply, “the gabled hall,” *kūṭ’āgāra,sālā*, built and donated by the Licchavī general Sīha. See SD 45.1 (2.1.1); A 5.34,1 @ SD 45.1 n & DPPN: kūṭāgārasālā. See below §3.51n on the Invitation.

3.50.2 “For this reason, bhikshus, whatever teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge, you should learn them well, associate with them, cultivate them, develop them, so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans!

What are the teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge, that you should learn well, associate with, cultivate, and develop, [120] so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans?

They are as follows:⁶⁵⁹

the 4 focuses of mindfulness,	<i>catu satipaṭṭhānā</i> ⁶⁶⁰
the 4 right efforts,	<i>samma-p, padhānā</i> ⁶⁶¹
the 4 paths to spiritual power,	<i>iddhi, pādā</i> ⁶⁶²
the 5 spiritual faculties,	<i>pañc 'indriyāni</i> ⁶⁶³
the 5 spiritual powers,	<i>pañca, balāni</i> ⁶⁶⁴
the 7 limbs of awakening,	<i>satta bojjhaṅgā</i> ⁶⁶⁵
the noble eightfold path.	<i>ariya aṭṭh 'aṅgika magga</i> ⁶⁶⁶

These, bhikshus, are the teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge: you should learn them well, associate with them, cultivate them, develop them, so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans.⁶⁶⁷

3.51 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:⁶⁶⁸

“Come now, bhikshus, this I say to you:

Formations [creations] by nature pass away! Strive on diligently!⁶⁶⁹

In no long time, the Tathāgata will attain parinirvana. The Tathāgata will attain parinirvana in three months' time.⁶⁷⁰

Ripe am I in years. Little of my life remains.⁶⁷¹
Now I go, leaving you, having made myself my refuge.

Be not heedless, bhikshus, be mindful, be virtuous,
Guard well your mind with well-focussed thought. [121]

He who is not heedless, keeping to the Dharma and Vinaya,

⁶⁵⁹ On this *māṭikā* (matrix) of the 7 sets, see **Intro (10.2+3)** above.

⁶⁶⁰ See D 1:56, 339, 2:83, 290-315, 3:101; S 3:96, 153; A 2:218, 3:12.

⁶⁶¹ See V 1:22; D 2:120; M 3:296, 2:96; A 2:74, 15 f.

⁶⁶² See D 2:213, 221; M 1:103 = 2:11; A 1:39, 297, 2:256, 3:82; Vbh 213.

⁶⁶³ See M 1:295; S 3:46, 225, 4:168; A 2:151. See foll n.

⁶⁶⁴ See D 2:120, 239; M 2:12, 3:296; S 3:96, 153, 4:366; A 3:10, 12; Vbh 342.

⁶⁶⁵ See D 2:79, 83, 120, 302, 3:101, 128, 251, 282; M 1:11, 2:12; S 1:54, 5:83' A 1:14, 4:23; Vbh 277.

⁶⁶⁶ See D 1:256 f, 165, 312; M 1:61, 118, 3:251; It 18; Sn 1130; Vbh 235.

⁶⁶⁷ On the central importance of these 7 sets, see Intro (10.3) above.

⁶⁶⁸ The future of the Licchavīs. The Buddha then makes a prophecy, not recorded in Mahā Parinibbāna S, but in **Kaliṅga-ra S** (S 20.8), where he declares the strengths and weaknesses of the Licchavīs, hinting at their eventual conquest by Ajāta-sattu, and warns the monks of their own future (S 20.8/2:267 f), SD 100.5.

⁶⁶⁹ *Vaya, dhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādettha*.

⁶⁷⁰ **Invitation Day** (*pavāraṇā/pravāraṇā*). It is curious that Mahā Parinibbāna S, with all its detailed treatments, fails to mention an important annual ceremony of the Sangha, that is, the Invitation, held on the last day of the rains retreat. It is highly unlikely that the gathering in the hall of the gabled house in the Great Wood was the Invitation assembly [§3.50 f] because it was “three months” *before* the parinirvana [§3.51] (which would be in Vesākha/Vaiśākha or May-June of the same year) [cf §5.7]. That would put the Great Wood assembly in **Māgha** (Feb-Mar).

In modern times, Māgha is highlighted by **Sangha Day**, commemorating the spontaneous assembly of 1250 arhats in the Buddha's presence. The first 1000 monks were enlightened upon listening to the Buddha, and the remaining 250 were Sāri-putta (Sāriputra) and Moggallāna (Maudgalyāyana) and their following (from Sañjaya's ashram). To mark the occasion the Buddha delivered the Ovāda Pāṭimokkha (Avavāda Prātimokṣa), “The Admonition Code” (the first proclamation of a monastic conduct, comprising Dh 183-185) (VA 186 f; Kkhv 9 f; MA 2:209; UA 298), and delivered during the 1st year of the Ministry in the Bamboo Grove soon after Sāriputta's gaining of arhathood and Dīgha, nakha's attaining of the Dharma Eye (M 1:501). See Piyasilo, *Buddhist Law*, 1988b:40 f.

⁶⁷¹ *Parittam mama jīvitam*, lit “my life is little.”

Leaving birth and samsara behind, will make an end of suffering.

Chapter 4

(Fourth Recital, *catuttha bhāṇavāra*: the Āḷāra cycle)

AṄGA

The elephant look⁶⁷²

[122] 4.1 Then the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, entered Vesālī for alms. Having gone into Vesālī for alms, he walked to collect almsfood and then finished his meal.⁶⁷³ While returning from his almsround, he turned around and, looking at Vesālī with the elephant gaze,⁶⁷⁴ addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, this is the last time the Tathāgata will be looking at Vesālī. Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Bhaṇḍa,-gāma**.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One together with a large order of monks arrived in Bhaṇḍa,gāma. The Blessed One stayed there in Bhaṇḍa,gāma.

4.2 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:⁶⁷⁵

“Bhikshus, it is through not understanding, not penetrating four teachings, that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

What are the four?

(1) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble moral virtue [the moral virtue of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(2) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble concentration [the mental concentration of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(3) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble wisdom [the wisdom of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

(4) It is through not understanding, not penetrating the noble liberation [the liberation of the noble ones], that you and I have long been running and wandering on this long journey in this manner.

Bhikshus, it is through penetrating, through understanding this noble moral virtue, [123] through penetrating, through understanding this noble concentration, through penetrating, through understanding this noble wisdom, through penetrating, through understanding this noble liberation, that craving for existence is uprooted, the rope of existence is broken, that there is no more rebirth here.”

4.3 The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the Sugata [Wellfarer], the teacher, further said this:

Moral virtue, concentration, wisdom and peerless liberation—

These truths have been understood by the famed Gotama.⁶⁷⁶

Through direct knowledge of the Dharma thus, the Buddha showed the monks,

The Teacher, the one with eyes, the end-maker of death, is utterly cooled.⁶⁷⁷

The 3 trainings

⁶⁷² This whole episode is not found in the Tibetan Dulva, which only says that the Buddha “[p]roceeding then from Bhoga-nagara, and journeying in the Mallas country (Malya in the text), he came to ‘the village of the Earth,’ and stopped in the Jalūkā mahāvana (*Dza-lu-kai ts’al-mang-pa*) (f 579^a),” where Cunda the smith visits him (Rockhill 1884:132 f).

⁶⁷³ That is, the Buddha had his meal (eating from his almsbowl) in Vesālī itself.

⁶⁷⁴ “Looking at Vesālī with the elephant gaze,” *nāgāpalokitam Vesālīm apaloketvā*. The Buddha turns his whole body around—the “elephant gaze” (*nāgāpalokita*)—to look at Vesālī as a final farewell gesture. The verb *apaloketi* is sometimes wr as *ava-loketi* through *o-loketi* (see §2.17 & n on *avaloketha*).

⁶⁷⁵ As at A 4.1/2:1 f, 7.62/4:105 (qu at Kvu 1.5.15/114 in a different context).

⁶⁷⁶ “By the famed Gotama,” *Gotamena yasassinā*. The whole stanza containing this phrase occurs at A 2:2, 4:105 & Kvu 116. The phrase occurs in Sarabhaṅga’s Theragāthā (Tha 488). This stanza, in the 3rd person, is clearly added by the Reciters or later elders.

⁶⁷⁷ “Utterly cooled,” *parinibbuto*. On the meaning and usage of this word, see (15) above.

4.4 Then the Blessed One, while staying at Bhaṇḍa,gāma, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

Sojourns

4.5 Then the Blessed One, having stayed at Bhaṇḍa,gāma for as long as he saw fit, addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Hatthi,gāma**.”

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Amba,gāma**.”

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Jambu,gāma**.”⁶⁷⁸

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **Bhoga,nagara**.”

4.6 “Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, arrived at Bhoga,nagara.⁶⁷⁹

The 4 great references

4.7 ⁶⁸⁰At Bhoga,nagara, the Blessed One stayed at **the Ānanda Cetiya** [Ānanda Shrine]. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, thus:

“Bhikshus, I will teach you these **4 great references**.⁶⁸¹ Listen to it, pay close attention, I will speak: **[124]** “Yes, bhante,” the monks replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

4.8 (1) “Here, bhikshus, *a monk* might say this: ‘Avusos, I heard and received this teaching from the Blessed One’s own mouth: “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”’⁶⁸² Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the Sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) against the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, “Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this monk.

Bhikshus, remember this as the first great reference.

4.9 (2) Here, bhikshus, a monk might say this: ‘Avusos, in such and such a place, there is a community [sangha] with elders, with distinguished teachers.⁶⁸³ I heard and received this teaching directly from [from the mouth of] that community: “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”’

Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the sutta [teaching] and should be examined (for conformity) with the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

⁶⁷⁸ Jambu,gāma (Skt Jambu,grāma), a village near Campā, the Aṅga capital. There is another Jambu,gāma on the high road between Vesālī and Kusinārā.

⁶⁷⁹ Bhoga,nagara, the city of the Bhogas, a constituent tribe of the Vajjī confederacy, lying midway between Vesālī and Pāvā.

⁶⁸⁰ Foll §§ [4.7-22] appear as at **Mahā’padesa S** (A 4.180/2:167-170).

⁶⁸¹ The 4 great references (*mahāpadesa*) serve as the criteria for the true teaching. See Intro (11).

⁶⁸² This statement is clearly in reference to **Purāṇa**, who visits Rājagaha after First Council but when asked to accept its resolutions gives this reply (Cv 11.1.11 @ V 2:288 f): see §3.11 n. It is possible that the 4 great references were formulated on account of Purāṇa here and inserted into the sutta. **Mahā Kamma,vibhaṅga S** (M 136) relates how the wanderer Potali,-putta falsely claims to have heard teaching directly from the Buddha himself, and presents wrong views which the novice monk (*navaka,bhikkhu*) Samiddhi is unable to put right (M 136,2/3:207). See S Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, 1984:18 f.

⁶⁸³ *Saṅgho...sa-t,thero sa,pāmokkho*.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, [125] ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this community.’

Bhikshus, remember this as the second great reference.

4.10 (3) Here, bhikshus, a monk might say this: ‘In such and such a place, there are many elder monks who are well learned, masters of scripture, Dharma-experts, Vinaya-experts, experts in the Summary Lists [Matrices].⁶⁸⁴ “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”

Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) against to the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by these elders.’

Bhikshus, remember this as the third great reference.

4.11 (4) Here, bhikshus, a monk might say this: ‘In such and such a place, there is an elder monk who is well learned, master of scripture, Dharma-expert, Vinaya-expert, expert in the Summaries [Matrices].⁶⁸⁵ “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s teaching.”

Then, bhikshus, you should neither approve nor disapprove of his word. Neither approving nor disapproving, his word and expression should be carefully studied and checked against the Sutta [teaching] and examined (for conformity) with the Vinaya [discipline].

If they, on such checking and examining, are found to conform neither to the Sutta nor to the Vinaya, then it should be concluded: ‘Surely, this is not the Blessed One’s word. It has been wrongly understood by this monk,’ and the matter is to be rejected.

But where, on such checking and examining, they are found to conform to the Sutta and the Vinaya, it should be concluded, [126] ‘Surely, this is the Blessed One’s word. It has been rightly understood by this elder.’

Bhikshus, remember this is the fourth great reference.

Bhikshus, remember these 4 great references.”

The 3 trainings

4.12 Then the Blessed One, while staying at Ānanda Shrine near Bhoga.nagara, gave a Dharma discourse to a large number of monks, saying,

“This is moral virtue, this is concentration, this is wisdom. Concentration, when well cultivated with moral virtue, brings great fruit and great profit. Wisdom, when well cultivated with concentration, brings great fruit and great profit. The mind, when well cultivated with wisdom, becomes completely free from the mental influxes, that is to say, from the influx of sensual lust, the influx of existence, the influx of false views and the influx of ignorance.”

⁶⁸⁴ *Sambahulā therā bhikkhū...bahussutā āgat’āgamā dhamma,dharā vinaya,dharā mātikā,dharā. Māṭikā* started off as a Vinaya term, where it refers to the Pāṭimokkha, eg in the stock phrase: *dhamma,dhara, vinaya,dhara, mātikā,dhara* (see Hinüber 1994). The Sutta materials are not arranged in a very systematic order, in spite of some early attempts (such as the last 2 suttas of D, ie D 33-34), esp **Das’uttara S** (D 34), containing lists on different concepts of the Dharma. The Comys call this text a *māṭikā* (DA 1054,29). The above usage [§4.10] of *māṭikā* prob refers to either such Vinay texts or such Sutta texts, or both. In post-Buddha times, the term *maṭikā* refers to lists or summaries of Abhidhamma teachings, serving as lemmata (headwords) which are then explained in the text: see Mohv:W xix-xxvii. These *māṭikās* arose once the early Buddhists “tried to go beyond the simple collection of discourses of the Buddha and began to arrange the main points of his teaching in a systematic form which at the same time could be easily memorized [see Frauwallner 1964:59 f]. | The lists thus created needed, just as the late Vedic Sūtra texts are hardly understandable without a commentary. Thus the *māṭikās* may be the Buddhist answer to the Vedic Sūtras [Frauwallner 1971b:104].” (Hinüber 1996:65).

⁶⁸⁵ *Eko thero bhikkhū...bahussuto āgat’āgamo dhamma,dharo vinaya,dharo mātikā,dharo.*

MALLA COUNTRY: PĀVĀ

Cunda the smith

4.13 ⁶⁸⁶Then the Blessed One, having stayed at the Ānanda Shrine near Bhoga,nagara for as long as he thought fit, addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāvā.”⁶⁸⁷

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, reached Pāvā. At Pāvā, the Blessed One stayed in the mango grove of Cunda the smith.⁶⁸⁸

4.14 Then Cunda the smith heard that the Blessed One had arrived in Pāvā and was staying there at his mango grove.

Then Cunda the smith, approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, he sat down at one side. When Cunda the smith was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened him with a Dharma talk.⁶⁸⁹

4.15 Then Cunda the smith, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk of the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One together with the order of monks accept a meal from me tomorrow.”

The Blessed One consented by his silence.

4.16 Then, Cunda the smith, understanding that the Blessed One had consented (to the invitation), rose from her seat and left.

4.17 Cunda the smith, by the end of the night,⁶⁹⁰ having prepared excellent foods, hard and soft, announced to the Blessed One that it was time:

“Bhante, it is time for the meal.”

Sūkara,maddava⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁶ From here [§4.13] until §4.25 = U 8.5/81-85. **The Sarvastivadin version** has this prose introduction based on E Waldschmidt’s version (*Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Mahāparinirvanasūtra*, Gottingen, 1939):

“Then the Blessed One, having early robed himself, took his bowl and went with the Great Order to the meal (given by Cunda). The Blessed One and the order sat on the appointed seats. When Cunda saw that all had taken their places, he took foods with his own hands and set them before the Blessed One and the noble order. At that time there was an bad monk, who then stole a copper bowl [SnA 159 says “golden vessel”] by hiding it under his armpit. The Blessed One by his psychic power caused it not to be seen by the people. Only the Buddha and Cunda saw the wrong deed. When Cunda perceived the Blessed One and the order were fully satisfied, he caused pure water, powder, and tooth-sticks to be passed around, and after they had laid their bowls aside and had washed and rinsed their mouths, then Cunda took a low seat, sat down before the Blessed One, and reverently questioned the Blessed One with a verse.” (Cunda S, Sn 1.5 = vv 83-90 then follows.) This account parallels that of U 8.5/82 & SnA 159. The Sarvastivadin tradition further has the following verses and prose to close the Cunda S:

Whereby that stupid person commits an bad deed | Such a one causes doubt all round among the good;
Trust not on outer signs when one stands before you, | Depend not such a one after short acquaintance.
Common people often make fallacious show, | And ever through the world they go deceiving. ||
Even as an earring overlaid with gold, | But underneath is copper, base and worthless,
One who is false within, but seeming real, | Draws to one pupils and misleads the good. ||
At this time, the Lord seeing the bounty (of the meal offered by Cunda) set forth his merit in a verse:
One who gives, the merit grows. | Of one restrained, no anger arises.
The good person puts aside base actions. | With lust and hate and delusion gone such a one has nirvana won.

(Cf Dh 224 f). [From *The Mula-sarvastivadin Vinaya*, E Waldschmidt, p66; qu by E J Thomas, *The Quest for Enlightenment*, 1950:72 f. The above translation has been revised by the author.]

⁶⁸⁷ According to Comy, **Pāvā** (Pāpā) is 3 *gavutas* (about 8 km or 5 miles) from Kusinārā (Kusīnagarī), ie modern Kasia [5. In]. Modern fieldwork has variously located Pāvā at Padrauna or Padraona, 19 km (12 mi) north of Kasia, or at Sathiyamva Fazilanagara, 14 km (9 mi) southeast of Kasia in the Meveris district of North Bihar. Walking that distance with great effort and sitting down at 25 places on the way, the Buddha reaches the sal grove when the sun has already set (DA 2:573). See §§4.21+39+5.1, where the Buddha complains of his weariness.

⁶⁸⁸ On Cunda, see Intro (13). It is stated at the opening of **Saṅgīti S** (D 33) that it is taught by Sāriputta here: see Intro (11.3).

⁶⁸⁹ See §1.25 n above.

⁶⁹⁰ See §1.30a n above.

⁶⁹¹ There is no mention of *sūkara,maddava* in the Tibetan Dulva account.

4.18 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to Cunda the smith's house, and sat down on the prepared seat. Seated thus, the Blessed One addressed Cunda the smith:

"Cunda, serve me the *sūkara,maddava*⁶⁹² that has been prepared, but serve the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared."⁶⁹³

"Yes, bhante," Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he served the Blessed One the *sūkara,maddava* that has been prepared, but served the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared.

"Yes, bhante," Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he served the Blessed One the *sūkara,maddava* that has been prepared, but served the order of monks with the other hard and soft foods that have been prepared.

4.19 Then the Blessed One address Cunda the smith:

"Cunda, as for the rest of the *sūkara,maddava*, bury it in a pit. Cunda, I can see no one in the world with its devas, Māras and Brahmās, in this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its princes and people who, if they were to eat it, could thoroughly digest it except the Tathāgata."⁶⁹⁴

"Yes, bhante," Cunda the smith replied in assent to the Blessed One, and then buried the rest of the *sūkara,maddava* in a pit.

Then he approached the Blessed One and having saluted him, sat down at one side. And as Cunda the smith sat at one side, the Blessed One then instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened him with a Dharma talk.⁶⁹⁵ Then rising from his seat, he left.



The Buddha's second dysentery attack

4.20 Then the Blessed One, on account of having eaten the food prepared by Cunda the smith, a serious illness arose in him, severe pains with bloody diarrhoea, with sharp pains as if he were about to die.⁶⁹⁶ But he [128] endured all this mindfully and fully aware, and without complaint.

Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

"Ānanda, let us go to Kusinārā."⁶⁹⁷

"Yes, bhante," the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

After eating Cunda the smith's food, I heard,
A serious illness fell upon the wise one, with sharp
pains as if bringing death.



The last meal (Thai temple mural painting)

⁶⁹² On *sūkara,maddava*, see Intro (13.2).

⁶⁹³ John Strong, in his notes to *The Buddha: A short biography* (2001), account of an episode that is found in all the other versions of the Buddha's last meal, that is, the mysterious and confused account of the "bad monk" who steals the bowl of food intended for the Buddha, thus forcing Cunda to prepare a second special meal, or who steals a bowl containing the leftovers of the meal (Bareau 1970-71:258-264).

⁶⁹⁴ Cf Lamotte 1976:313 f.

⁶⁹⁵ Evidently, the Buddha's teachings to Cunda at this point, though nothing is mentioned here, is recorded in the Sutta Nipāta as **Cunda S** (Sn Sn 1.5 = vv 83-90) [4.13n]. The Aṅguttara has the relatively long **Cunda Kammāra,putta S** (A 10.176/5:263-268), where Cunda takes refuge. See §1.25 n above.

⁶⁹⁶ This is the second attack of dysentery. The first attack mentioned at §2.23. On whether the Buddha was poisoned, see Intro (13.1).

⁶⁹⁷ Kusinārā (Skt Kuśī,nagarī) is about 80 km southeast of Pāvā.

And the *sūkara, maddava* that was eaten
By the Teacher brought him a serious illness,
Having purged, the Blessed One then said,
“I am going to Kusinārā town.”⁶⁹⁸

4.21 Then the Blessed One came down from the road and went to the foot of a certain tree, and then addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please,⁶⁹⁹ Ānanda, spread the upper robe [sanghati], folded in four,⁷⁰⁰ for me. I am tired, Ānanda, and would like to sit down.”⁷⁰¹

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he spread the upper robe, folded in four, for him.

KAKUṬṬHĀ RIVER

The clearing of the water

4.22 The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat. Seated thus, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”

When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Just now, bhante, at least 500 carts have crossed over it. The shallow water, disturbed by the wheels, flows murky and dirty. Bhante, this Kakutthā river, not far off, has clear, [129] sweet, cool and clean water, easy to ford and delightful.”⁷⁰²

4.23 For the second time, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”

For the second time, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Just now, bhante, at least 500 carts have crossed over it. The shallow water, disturbed by the wheels, flows murky and dirty. Bhante, this Kakutthā river, not far off, has clear, sweet, cool and clean water, easy to ford and delightful.

4.24 For the third time, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty, Ānanda, I wish to drink.”⁷⁰³

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and taking a bowl he went to the stream.

Then the shallow stream over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed by the wheels, *flowed clear, bright and clean, even as the venerable Ānanda approached it.*

4.25 Then this occurred to the venerable Ānanda:

“How wonderful! How marvellous! Great is the Tathāgata’s power, great is his glory! This shallow stream over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed by the wheels, now flows clear, bright and clean, even as I approach it!”

Carrying the bowl of water, he approached the Blessed One, and said this to him:

“How wonderful, bhante! How marvellous, bhante! Great is the Tathāgata’s power, great is his glory! This shallow stream, bhante, over which at least 500 carts had crossed, its waters flowing murky and dirty, disturbed

⁶⁹⁸ Comy says that these verses (like those at §§38 & 41) are probably those of the Council elders (cf DA 615).

⁶⁹⁹ *Īṅha*, alt tr, “come now!”

⁷⁰⁰ On “folded in four” (*catu-g, guṇam*), see §4.39 n.

⁷⁰¹ According to Comy, Pāva (Pāpā) is three *gavutas* (approximately 8 km or 5 miles) from Kusinārā (Kuśinagarī). Walking that distance with great effort and sitting down at 25 places on the way, the Buddha reaches the sal grove when the sun has already set (DA 2:573). Thus illness comes to a man, crushing all his health. As if he wants to point to this fact, the Buddha speaks these deeply moving words: “I am weary, Ānanda, and wish to sit down” (*kilanto ’smi Ānanda nisīdissāmi*) here [§4.21]. On reaching the Upavattana sal grove near Kusinārā, the Buddha says, “I am weary, Ānanda, I wish lie down (*nipajjissāmi*)” [§5.1]: see §4.39, where he says the same to Cundaka.

⁷⁰² *Acchôdikā* [elsewhere *acchôdakā*] *sâtôdakā sītôdakā setakā supatīṭṭhitā ramaṇīyā* (D 2:128; M 1:76 = 283 = S 1:91 = A 3:190; A 3:238). CPD (*acchôdaka*): *Kakuttham acchôdi, sâtôdika, vippasannam*, D 2:135*, is a haplogly (accidental omission) as in *somana, domanassam*, Sn 67, see Sadd 3:158.

⁷⁰³ The Tibetan Dulva version says that at Ānanda’s request, the Buddha does not drink the water of the Kakusthana [Kakuttha] river, but only washes his body with it (f 582^a) (Rockhill 1884:134).

by the wheels, now flows clear, bright and clean even as I approach it! Let the Blessed One drink this water, let the Sugata [Wellfarer] drink this water.”

Then the Blessed One drank the water.⁷⁰⁴ [130]

Pukkusa Malla,putta

4.26⁷⁰⁵ Now at that time, Pukkusa Malla,putta⁷⁰⁶ a disciple of Āḷāra Kālāma,⁷⁰⁷ was going along the highway from Kusināra to Pāvā. Then Pukkusa Malla,putta saw the Blessed One sitting under a certain tree. Having approached the Blessed One, he saluted him and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, Pukkusa Malla,putta said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace!

4.27 PUKKUSA’S STORY OF ĀḶĀRA. Once, bhante, Āḷāra Kālāma, going along the highway, came down from it and sat down under a certain tree for the midday rest. Then, bhante, at least 500 carts passed very close by him. Then, bhante, a certain man following close behind the caravan of carts approached Āḷāra Kālāma, and then said this to him:

‘But, bhante, did you not see that at least 500 carts had passed by?’

‘No, avuso, I did not see them.’

‘Then, bhante, did you not hear any sound?’

‘No avuso, I did not hear any sound.’

‘But, bhante, were you not asleep?’

‘No, avuso, I was not asleep.’

‘Then, bhante, were you conscious?’

‘Yes, avuso.’

‘So, bhante, you were both conscious and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by you, and yet you did not see them, nor hear a sound—but, bhante, your upper robe is covered with dust!’

‘Yes, avuso.’

Then, bhante, this occurred to that person:

‘It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace! And he is both conscious [131] and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by you, and yet you did not see them, nor hear a sound!’

After expressing his deep faith in Āḷāra Kālāma, he left.”

The threshing-house near Ātumā

⁷⁰⁴ For a similar miraculous story—this time, a well in the brahmin village of Thūṇa that has been filled up with grass and chaff to prevent the monks from drawing water therefrom—but on the Buddha’s instructions, Ānanda goes to the well which opens itself up and Ānanda is able to draw water, The Buddha the utters this *udāna*: “What is there to do with a well | if there is always water? | Having cut craving at its root, | what is there to one wander about seeking?” (U 7.9/78 f).

⁷⁰⁵ The following sections [§§26-38]—Pukkusa’s offer of the golden robes and the transfiguration—are unique this Sutta.

⁷⁰⁶ **Pukkusa Malla,putta** (Skt Putkasa Malla,putra/Mālya,putra) (M 2:152; A 2:85; J 4:205, 306; Lalv 21.17. Comy says that Pukkusa is probably a name (not a tribe or caste), as the Mallas were kshatriyas. Pukkusa was the owner of the 500 carts that had just passed by (DA 569). If Pukkusa has met Āḷāra himself, he (the former) must be more than 45 years old, perhaps 65 (if he meets Āḷāra when he is 20), in which case *Malla,putta* cannot be tr as “the young Malla.” Perhaps “the Malla noble” would be more appropriate. Āḷāra is said to have died “seven days ago” (M 26.22/1:170 @ SD 1.11), ie counting from the time the Buddha decides to teach the Dharma (V 1:7; M 1:170; S 1:138; D 2:39 Vipassī Buddha; Mvst 3:318; cf. S:B 1:233 n372; also Sn 1146c): see **Why the Buddha “hesitated”**, SD 12.1(2-3).

⁷⁰⁷ **Āḷāra**, one of the Bodhisattva’s early teachers, taught him meditation up to the base of nothingness (*ākāṅkha-cāññ’āyatana*). Buddhaghosa says that Āḷāra was also called Dīgha,piṅgala; **Kālāma** was his family name (DA 2:569 = MA 2:171). The story of the Bodhisattva’s first two teachers is found in **Ariya,pariyesanā S** (M 26.15/1:163-168), **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36/1:240; **Saṅgarāva S** (M 100/2:212); **Madhyam’āgama** of the Sarvāstivāda (T26.776b5-777a4; **Vinaya** of the Dharmaguptakas (T1428.780bt-c19); cf J 1:66; DhA 1:85; ApA 71; BA 6; DhsA 34; MahvsṬ 66. See SD 1.11(15) (Ariyapariyesanā S).

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4.28 “What do you think, Pukkusa? Which do you think is more difficult to do or to attain to—being both conscious and awake as at least 500 carts passed very close by one, but one were neither to see nor to hear them, or being both conscious and awake while it is raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and one were neither to see them nor to hear them?”

4.29 “Indeed, bhante, how can one compare 500 carts or six hundred carts or seven hundred carts or eight hundred carts or nine hundred carts or a thousand carts, or hundreds of thousands of carts? It will be more difficult to be both conscious and awake while it is raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and one were neither to see them nor to hear them.”

4.30 ^{708c} “At one time, Pukkusa, I was staying in a threshing-house near Ātumā. ⁷⁰⁹ It then began raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and two farmers of the threshing-house, who were brothers, and four oxen, were killed. Then, Pukkusa, a great crowd of people came out of Ātumā and came to the place where the two brothers who were farmers and the four oxen were killed.

4.31 Then, Pukkusa, I came out of the threshing-house to walk back and forth in the open. Then, Pukkusa, a certain person from the great crowd approached me. Having saluted, he stood at one side, and standing thus at one side, Pukkusa, I said this to that person:

4.32 ‘Avuso, why has such a great crowd of people gathered together?’ [132]

‘Bhante, it was raining now, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, and two farmers who were brothers, and four oxen, have been killed. Then, bhante, a great crowd of people has come out of Ātumā and come to the place where the two brothers who were farmers and the four oxen were killed. So the great crowd of people has gathered here, but, bhante, where were you?’

‘I was right here, avuso.’

‘But, bhante, did you not see anything?’

‘No, avuso, I did not see anything.’

‘Then, bhante, did you not hear any sound?’

‘No avuso, I did not hear any sound.’

‘But, bhante, were you not asleep?’

‘No, avuso, I was not asleep.’

‘Then, bhante, were you conscious?’

‘Yes, avuso.’

‘So, bhante, you were both conscious and awake while it was raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, but you neither saw anything nor heard a sound!’ ⁷¹⁰

‘Yes, avuso.’ ⁷¹¹



Pukkusa the last layman

4.33 Then, Pukkusa, this occurred to that person:

‘It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante!

4.33.2 How those gone forth, bhante, dwell in peace!

While it was raining, lightning flashing and thunder bursting, but you, being both conscious and awake, neither saw anything nor heard a sound!’

4.33.3 After expressing his deep faith in me, he saluted, and going rightwise, left.”

4.34 Hearing this, Pukkusa Malla,putta said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, this faith I have in Āḷāra Kālāma is blown away [winnowed away] by a great wind, and washed away by the swift currents of a great river! It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante!

Just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned, or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed One.

⁷⁰⁸ §4.30 here as at V 1:249 f (story of Subhadda, “one gone forth in old age” [§5.23]).

⁷⁰⁹ The threshing house near Ātumā. It was here, says the Vinaya, on account of **Subhadda**, “one gone forth in old age” (who had expressed relief at the Buddha’s passing [§6.20]) that the Buddha laid down two rules entailing wrong-doing (*dukkata*). See §6.20n below; also C 1:239 f.

⁷¹⁰ *So tvam bhante saññī samāno jāgaro deve vassante deve haḷa, galāyante vijjutāsu niccharantīsu asaniyā phalantiyā n’eva addasa na pana saddam assosīti*. See SD 49.5b (2.3.1.4).

⁷¹¹ On this nature of dhyana, see SD 33.1b (6.2.1.1).

I go to this very Blessed One for refuge, [133] to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a layman who has gone for refuge from this day forth for life.”⁷¹²

The gold-coloured robes

4.35 Then Pukkusa Malla,putta addressed a certain man [worker]:

“I say there, please bring me a pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.”⁷¹³

“Yes, bhante,”⁷¹⁴ the man replied in assent to Pukkusa Malla,putta, and then brought the pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.

Then Pukkusa Malla,putta offered the pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One, out of compassion, accept this pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wearing.”

“In that case, Pukkusa, dress⁷¹⁵ me in one, and (give) the other to Ānanda.”⁷¹⁶

“Yes, bhante,” Pukkusa replied in assent to the Blessed One, and then dressed the Blessed One in one (of the robes), and (gave) the other to Ānanda.⁷¹⁷

4.36 Then the Blessed One instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened Pukkusa Malla,putta with Dharma talk. Having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk by the Blessed One, Pukkusa Malla,putta then rose from his seat, and having saluted the Blessed One, left.

The transfiguration

4.37 Then not long after Pukkusa Malla,putta had left, the venerable Ānanda arranged⁷¹⁸ the pair of gold-coloured ready-to-wear robes on the Blessed One, and as he did so, it appeared to have lost its radiance.

Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! How exceedingly pure and clear, bhante, is the Tathāgata’s complexion! Bhante, when this pair of gold-coloured ready-to-wear robes [134] is placed on the Blessed One’s body, it appears to have lost its radiance!”⁷¹⁹

“Such it is, Ānanda. There are two occasions, Ānanda, when the Tathāgata’s complexion appears exceedingly pure and clear. What are the two?”

On the night when the Tathāgata awakens to the supreme self-awakening, Ānanda, and on the night when he attains to the nirvana-element without residue at his final passing.⁷²⁰

⁷¹² This makes Pukkusa the last layman to take refuge before the Buddha himself.

⁷¹³ “A pair of gold-coloured robes, ready for wearing,” *siṅgi,vaṇṇaṃ yugaṃ maṭṭaṃ dhāraṇīyaṃ*. These two robes are probably the outer robe (*uttarāsaṅga*), covering the whole body and the upper robe (*saṅghāṭī*), worn folded over the left shoulder: cf V 1:94. The upper robe is doubled up with the outer robe for keeping oneself warm, or folded up as a seat [§4.21] or for lying on [§4.29], or used as an outer robe when the soiled robe is washed and dried. The two robes are identical in form. However, the text here does not mention what kind of robe “the pair” are.

⁷¹⁴ Or, “reverend sir.” Here the man is addressing Pukkusa, who was obviously a man of means. See **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97.27a/2:192): SD 4.9 §27a n.

⁷¹⁵ *Upanāmesi*, fr *upanāmeti*, “he offers; he arranges or places.” See §4.37.

⁷¹⁶ *Tena hi pukkusa ekena maṃ acchādehi ekena ānandaṃ*. That is, Ānanda is simply keeping the robe on the Buddha’s behalf.

⁷¹⁷ *Ekena bhagavantam acchādesi, ekena āyasmantaṃ ānandaṃ*. If we take it that Ānanda is the recipient one of the two robes, it is clearly problematic in that Ānanda is receiving a share of choice robes, when the very first condition that Ānanda sets for becoming the Buddha’s personal attendant is is “the Buddha should never pass on to him any choice robes he has received” (J 4:96; ThaA 3:112): see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004:6.3. See D:W 573 n421: “This ridiculous story is probably a late insertion.” However, it should be noted that after Pukkusa had left, Ānanda arranged the second robe on the Buddha.

⁷¹⁸ *Upanāmesi*, see 4.35n.

⁷¹⁹ Comy: It seems as if the radiance was gone, like coals whose bright flames have departed (*yathā hat’ acciko āngāro ant’ anten’ eva jotati, bahi pan’ assa pabhā n’ atthi, evaṃ bahi paṭicchanna-p.pabham hutvā khāyatī ti attho*, DA 570).

⁷²⁰ *Anupādi.sesa,nibbāna,dhātu* [§§3.20+5.8×2]: see (15). On the term *parinibbāna*, see **Intro (15)** above.

4.38 Ānanda, in the last watch⁷²¹ tonight, the Tathāgata's parinirvana will occur between the twin sal⁷²² trees in the sal grove of the Mallas in Upavattana [Upavattana Wood] near Kusinārā.

Come, Ānanda, let us go to **the Kakutthā river**.⁷²³

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Pukkusa brings a pair of gold-coloured robes, burnished and ready for wear,
When the Teacher dons it, his gold-hued complexion shines forth bright.⁷²⁴

The elder Cundaka

4.39⁷²⁵ Then the Blessed One together with the great order of monks went to the Kakutthā river. There, they bathed, drank and came out of the river, and headed for the mango grove. There, the Blessed One addressed the venerable **Cundaka**:⁷²⁶

“Please, Cundaka, spread the upper robe [sanghati], folded in four, for me. I am tired, Cundaka, and would like to lie down.”⁷²⁷

⁷²¹ Traditionally, **the Buddha's day** is divided into 5 periods: the forenoon, the afternoon, the first watch, the middle watch, and the last watch. Rising early (ie about 4-5 am), the Buddha rouses in himself the attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā, samāpatti*) and surveys the world with his divine eye to see whom he can help. **Forenoon**: During the early hours of dawn, the Buddha attends to his bodily needs and toilet. Then he sits down in solitary meditation or retreat (*paṭisallāna*), after which he (DA 1:45). **Afternoon**: After his noon meal, he surveys the mental dispositions of his audience and delivers a discourse, advising them on the Dharma and its practice, and establishes them in the Refuges and the Precepts. During the third part of the afternoon, towards evening, the people dwelling nearby, who have given alms in the morning, having dressed and groomed themselves, and bringing perfumes, garlands and other offerings, assemble in the monastery. The Buddha sits on his special seat in the assembly hall and teaches the Dharma in a way fitting to the occasion and audience.

After his afternoon activities, the Buddha returns to his cell to spend a period of solitary retreat. The **first watch of the night** (*paṭhama- or purima, yāma*), extending from 6 to 10 pm, is exclusively reserved for the instruction of the order members who have arrived from various directions to attend upon the Buddha. Some ask questions, some inquire about points of Dharma, some request meditation subjects. After the order members have dispersed, during **the middle watch** (*majjhima, yāma*), extending from 10 pm to 2 am, heavenly beings approach the Buddha to consult him. **The last watch** (*pacchima, yāma*), lasting from 2 to 6 am, is divided into two sessions (DA 147). Because his body aches from sitting for long periods since early morning, the Buddha spends the first portion of the last watch mindfully pacing up and down (*caṇi kamana*) to dispel the discomfort. During the second part of the last watch (ie around 3 to 5 am), the Buddha enters the Fragrant Cell and mindfully sleeps, experiencing nirvanic or dhyanic bliss. In other words, the Buddha sleeps only about two hours daily. Finally, during the third part of the last watch, just before dawn, he rises, takes a seat and rouses in himself the attainment of great compassion. Cultivating thoughts of lovingkindness towards all beings, he surveys the world with his Buddha-eye and seeks out those who have observed their duties (eg giving alms and keeping to the Precepts in the presence of past Buddhas) and to whom he can assist spiritually.

⁷²² *Sāla* (Skt *śāla*), the sal tree, *Shorea robusta* (D 2:134; M 1:448; A 1:209, 3:49, 214; Dh 162). This is said to be the tree under which the Bodhisattva is born in Lumbinī park, lying between Kapila, vatthu and Deva, dāha (J 1:52, 328; ApA 57).

⁷²³ **Kakutthā river** divides Kusinārā (Kusinagarī) and Pāvā (Pāpā) (D 2:129, 134 ff; U 7.5). It is called Cocouthes by the ancient Greek writers. Today the river is called the Kuku. Some scholars, however, identify it with the modern Ghāgī, a small stream flowing into the Little Gandak, about 3 km (2 miles) to the west of Chitiyaon in the Gorakhpur district.

⁷²⁴ T W Rhys Davids notes in his tr: “We have here the commencement of the legend which afterwards grew into an account of an actual ‘transfiguration’ of the Buddha. It is very curious that it should have taken place soon after the Buddha had announced to Ānanda his approaching death, and that in the Buddhist Sutta it should be connected so closely with that event; for a similar remark applies to the Transfiguration mentioned in the Gospels.” (D:RD 2:146 n1). It is said of Jesus Christ that “his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them” (Mark 9:2-8; Matt 17:1-13; Luke 9:28-36; RSV). In the case of the Buddha, it is his whole body that radiates greatly, some 500 years (or at least 200 years in terms of the recorded tradition) before the biblical story. See **Miracles**, SD SD 27.5 (2.1.3+4)

⁷²⁵ Foll §§ [4.39-43] as at U 8.5.

⁷²⁶ It is possible that this **Cundaka or Cunda** (see next sentence) is the same as Mahā Cunda and Cunda Samaṇ'uddesa, the younger brother of Sāriputta. Cunda Samaṇ'uddesa appears in both **Pāsādika S** (D 29) and **Sāmagāma S** (M 104). It is significant that in Pāsādika S, the Buddha, at the height of his instruction, tells him, “But now I am an elder teacher of long standing, Cunda, one long gone forth, whose journey is done, my life is coming to a close” (*aham kho pana Cunda etarahi satthā thero rattaññū cira, pabbajito addha, gato vayo anuppatto*) (D 29.14/3:125). It is possible that these two Suttas record events occurring at this point in our Sutta here in connection with Cunda. There is an anachronism, however: Mahāvīra predeceases the Buddha, dying in 527 BCE; the Buddha dies in c405 BCE (traditional date: 543 BCE). A L Basham, in his *History and Doctrine of the Ājīvikas*, London, 1951, thinks that Makkhali Gosāla may be meant here. See DPPN: 2. Cunda. See also **Pāsādika S** (D 29), SD 401.6 (3).

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Cundaka replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he prepared the upper robe, folded in four.

4.40 Then the Blessed One laid himself down on his right lion-like, resting foot on foot, mindful and fully aware, [135] mentally noting the time for rising.⁷²⁸ The venerable Cundaka sat down right there before the Blessed One.

4.41 The Buddha, going to the Kakutthā river,

Clear, clean and bright,
The Teacher immersed his weary frame,
The Buddha unequalled in the world.
Having bathed and drunk, the Teacher then emerged,
Leading on, in the midst of the group of monks.
The Teacher, the Blessed One, who points out the Dharma here.
The great sage to the mango grove came.
He addressed the monk called Cundaka,
“Spread me a place to lie on.”
The joyful Cunda[ka], one of mind well cultured,
At once spread out a robe folded in four.
The Teacher laid down his weary frame,
And right there before him sat Cunda[ka].

Exoneration of Cunda

4.42 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“It might be, Ānanda, one might cause remorse in Cunda the smith, saying, ‘It is your loss, avuso Cunda, it is by your failure [defeat] that the Tathāgata attained parinirvana after taking his alms-meal from you!’”⁷²⁹

But Cunda’s remorse should be dispelled in this way:

‘This is your gain, Cunda, it is your great gain [victory], that the Tathāgata attained parinirvana after taking his last alms-meal from you! For, avuso Cunda, I have heard and understood from the Blessed One’s own mouth that these two alms-meals [136] are of the very same fruit, of very same result, and more fruitful and more profitable than any other. Which two?’

The one is the alms-meal after eating which the Tathāgata awakens to supreme awakening⁷³⁰ and the other, after which the Tathāgata attains the nirvana-element without residue at his final passing. These two almsgiving are of the very same fruit, of very same result, and more fruitful and more profitable than any other.

By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to	long life.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to	beauty.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to	happiness.
By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to	fame.

⁷²⁷ *Īṅha me tvam cundaka catu-g.guṇam saṅghāṭim paññāpehi, kilanto’smi cundaka nipajjissāmī ti.* Here, “folded in four” (*catu-g.guṇam*) means that the robe is folded twice over, ie, it is stretched lengthwise along the “fold” (*vivaṭṭa*), comprising the “neck half-circle” (*aḍḍha,maṇḍala, gīveyyaka*) and the “knee folding circle” (*maṇḍala vivaṭṭa, jaṅgheyayaka*) (V 1:287), ie, folded halfway by, say, two persons, holding it lengthwise by its top corners, and then one more similar fold. This length however would reach just above the ankles, or one could use some sort of pillow for the head and let the robe-length reach under the feet. See CS Upasak 1975:89.

⁷²⁸ “Mentally noting the time for rising” when one is going to sleep is an example of “sleeping mindfully,” mentioned in **Sati,paṭṭhāna S** (M 10.8(7)/1:57). In **Pacalā S** (A 7.58), the Buddha exhorts, “Moggallāna, mindful and fully aware, you should lie down lion-like on your right side, placing foot on foot, keeping in mind the thought that on awakening, you would get up quickly, thinking, ‘I will dwell without indulging in the pleasure of sleep, or in the pleasure of reclining, or in the pleasure of drowsiness’” (*na seyya,dukham na passa,sukham na middha,sukham amuyutto*) (A 7.58/4:87), SD 4.11. On this mental noting of rising up again, see also n at §5.1.

⁷²⁹ See §§4.18-20.

⁷³⁰ That is, the gift made just before the great awakening at Buddha, gayā, but no mention is made of its giver—according to the Theravada tradition, it is the lady Sujātā: see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004 §2.18.

By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to a heavenly life.
 By Cunda the smith is piled up karma conducive to greatness [lordship].⁷
 In this way, is Cunda the smith's remorse to be expelled." (D 2:138)

4.43 Then the Blessed One, knowing the purpose of the moment, uttered this verse of uplift:

To one who gives, merit grows; to the restrained, no anger heaps.
 The skillful one casts off bad; destroying lust, hate and delusion, he is cooled.

Chapter 5

(Fifth Recital, *pañcama bhāṇavāra*: the Hiraññavatī)

KUSINĀRĀ: THE FINAL HOURS

The Upavattana Sal Grove

[137] 5.1 ⁷³¹Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

^{732c}“Come, Ānanda, let us go to **the sal grove** of the Mallas at **Upavattana**,⁷³³ Kusināra, on the farther bank of the Hirañña, vatī river.⁷³⁴

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One, together with a large order of monks, went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas on the banks across the Hirañña, vatī river, near Kusināra.

Then he addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Please, Ānanda, prepare a couch for me, with its head to the north,⁷³⁵ between the twin sal trees. I am tired, Ānanda, I wish to lie down.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and he prepared a couch for the Blessed One, with its head to the north, between the twin sal trees. Then the Blessed One laid himself down on his right, lion-like, resting foot on foot, mindful and fully aware.⁷³⁶

⁷³¹ The following sections [§§5.1-11]—the sal grove; Upavāṇa; the devas' lamentations; the 4 holy places; monks' attitude to women; treatment of the Buddha's remains—are all unique to this Sutta.

^{732c} *Āyāṃ ānanda hiraññā, vatīyā nadiyā pārima, tīraṃ yena kusiṇārā, upavattanaṃ mallānaṃ sāla, vanaṃ ten' upasaṅka-missāma ti.* As at **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17, 1.2.1/2:169), SD 36.12; Divy 208.25, 209.3; see Dīpv 6.19.

⁷³³ The row of sāla-trees stretched from south-west corner of Kusināra eastwards and then northwards towards the southern city-gate. The grove was SW of Kusināra (UA 238). **Upavattana** (Skt *upavartana* = recreation ground): the sal grove there belongs to the Mallas of Kusināra, their capital (D 2:137). Upavattana is prob the name of the locality in which the grove is located: see Dīpv 6.19 & long def & refs at BHSD: upavartana.

⁷³⁴ The **Hirañña, vatī** (Hiraṇya, vatī) river runs by Upavattana sal grove. Crossing the Hirañña, vatī (Skt Hiraṇyavatī), the Buddha reaches the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas (D 2:146, 170; S 1:157 = A 2:79; J 1:392, 5:278; Divy 152 ff). The Hiraṇyavatī river is today called the Little Gandak, flowing through district of Gorakhpur about 13 km (8 miles) to the west of the Great Gandak and falls into the Ghogra. Kusināra is located near modern Kasia in the district of Deoria, Uttar Pradesh. The site of **Kusināra** is certainly to be in the extensive ruins near the present village of Kasia at the junction of the Rapti river and the Little Gandak river (the ancient Hiraṇyavatī, a tributary of the Śarayu or Ghaghara), 60 km (37 mi) east of Gorakhpur and on the border of North Bihar. The Mallas of Kusināra and the Mallas of Pāvā were located to the east and south of the Koliyas. See J Finegan, *An Archaeological History of Religions of Indian Asia*, 1989:81 f.

⁷³⁵ In other words, the Buddha is lying down in a north-south alignment in harmony with the geomagnetic flow of the earth, as it were. It is probable that the Buddha lies on his right lion-like, and so faces the west (the setting sun), unlike when he awakens to the supreme self-awakening when he faces the east (the rising sun) (J 1:71). Lying in this manner, too, would be proper as the setting sun would shine in his face. Anyway, Comys did not attach any special meaning to *uttara, -sīsaka* (with the head to the north), only noting that it is traditionally said that there was a row of sal trees at the head (*sīsa*) of the couch, and another close to it foot. The twin sal trees were so called because the two trees were equally grown as regards roots, trunks and branches and foliage. There was a couch (or bench) in the park for special use of the Malla chief, and it was this couch that the Blessed One instructed Ānanda to prepare. (DA 2:573). The 7th cent sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, in fact, rejects the view of some that the Buddha wanted to lie down facing the east, and attached no special significance to the couch arrangement (DAT 2:224). Rhys Davids notes that the *uttara, sīsaka* “may have been the name for a slab of wood or stone reserved on great occasion for the use of the leaders of the neighbouring republic, but available at other times to passers-by” (D:RD 2:149 n1).

⁷³⁶ *Atha kho Bhagavā dakkhiṇena passena sīha, seyyaṃ kappesi pāde pādāṃ accādhāya sato sampajāno.* Note that the phrase, *uṭṭhāna, saññāṃ manasikarivā*, “mentally noting the time for rising,” is omitted here. Elsewhere, the stock phrase for the Buddha's act of lying down to rest reads, “Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side, lion-like, with one foot

5.2⁷³⁷ Then at that time, the twin sal trees burst forth in full blossom and fruit, albeit untimely, the blossoms falling on the Blessed One's body, showering down upon it, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly mandārava [coral tree] flowers fell from the sky, heavenly sandalwood powder fell from the sky, showering down upon the Blessed One's body, [138] covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly music resounded through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly songs wafted through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata.

The supreme worship

5.3 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, the twin sal trees are bursting forth with full blossom and fruit, albeit untimely, the blossoms are falling on the Tathāgata's body, showering down upon it, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata.

Heavenly mandārava [coral tree] flowers are falling from the sky, heavenly sandalwood powder is falling from the sky, showering down upon the Tathāgata's body, covering it up, in homage to the Tathāgata.

Heavenly music is resounding through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly songs are wafting through the sky in homage to the Tathāgata.⁷³⁸

5.3.2 But, Ānanda, this is not the way to honour, respect, revere, worship, or esteem the Tathāgata.⁷³⁹ Ānanda, whatever monk, nun, layman or laywoman⁷⁴⁰ practises the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, properly practising, living in accordance with the Dharma, he honours the Tathāgata, respects him, reveres him, worships him with **the supreme worship**.⁷⁴¹ Therefore, Ānanda, consider thus:

“We will practise the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, properly practising, dwelling in accordance with the Dharma!”—this is how you should train yourself.”⁷⁴²

Upavāna and seeing the Buddha⁷⁴³

5.4 Now at the time, the venerable **Upavāna**⁷⁴⁴ was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning him.⁷⁴⁵ Then the Blessed One dismissed⁷⁴⁶ him, saying:

on top of the other, mindful and fully aware, mentally noting the time for rising” [§4.40]. Here, however, the Buddha is lying down for the last time and will pass away in this posture. As such, he makes no mental note to get up in due course.

⁷³⁷ This miraculous episode not mentioned in the Tibetan Dulva (Rockhill 1884:135).

⁷³⁸ *Sabba, phāliphullā kho Ānanda yamaka, sālā akāla, pupphehi Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāni pi mandārava, pupphāni antalikkhā papanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya, dibbāni pi candana, cuṇṇāni antalikkhā papanti, tāni Tathāgatassa sarīraṃ okiranti ajjhokiranti abhippakiranti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāni pi turiyāni antalikkhe vajjenti Tathāgatassa pūjāya. Dibbāni pi saṅgītāni antalikkhe vajjenti Tathāgatassa pūjāya.* This identical passage [§5.3a] appears in the previous para [§5.2], but I have rendered it here differently according to English idiom. The versatility of Pali syntax in terms of tense (both using the historical present) is evident here, but not reflected in the English tr

⁷³⁹ See **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (M 35), where the arhat is said to do all this by declaring that the Buddha is “awakened ...; mentally tamed...; stilled...; crossed over...; quenched...” and “teaches the Dharma” for the same of these (M 35.26b/1:235), SD 26.5.

⁷⁴⁰ Note here that this important exhortation on the “supreme worship” is addressed to all the 4 companies (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen). However, there is evidence of a monastic-lay distinction here in Buddhaghosa's commentary: see Intro (7.2).

⁷⁴¹ “**Supreme worship**,” *paramā pūjā*, alt tr “highest homage,” ie the highest puja: see **Intro (7.2)** above. On the story of Dhamm'ārāma, see Intro (14). Cf **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (M 35), where in a similar connection, the arhat is said to accomplished in the 3 supremacies (*anuttariya*) (M 35,26.2/1:235), SD 26.5.

⁷⁴² *Tasmāt ih' Ānanda dhammānudhamma, paṭipannā viharissāma samīci, paṭipannā anudhamma, cārinō ti, evaṃ hi vo Ānanda sikkhitabban ti.* Comy's explanations of the key words here, see Intro (7.2).

⁷⁴³ In the Tibetan Dulva account, this Upavāna episode is inserted after the Mahā Sudassana story [§5.18].

⁷⁴⁴ **Upavāna** or Upavana is an elder of Sāvathī and one of the Buddha's attendants (ThaA 2:56 f :: Tha:RD 350). See Tha 185 f for his verses (also S 7.13; cf Miln 134, Miln:H 1:187 n8). On his orig: Ap 22/70,22-74,7 (ApA 343,27 f). **Deva,hita S** (S 7.13) records how Upavāna, as the Buddha's attendant, mindfully attends to him when he was suffering from wind illness (S 7.13/1:174 f ≈ DhA 4:232,18). In **Upavāna S** (S 35.70), he asks the Buddha on the meaning of *sandīṭṭhika* (directly visible; seen for oneself) which the Buddha explains as that of direct awareness of lust as it arises through sense-experience (S 35.70/4:41-44). In **Pāsādika S** (D 29), he fans the Buddha as he teaches, and the Sutta title is to his <http://dharmafarer.org>

“Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!”

Then the venerable Ānanda thought, “This [139] venerable Upavāṇa has been the Blessed One’s personal attendant for a long time, always near at hand and available.⁷⁴⁷ What is the reason, what is the cause [condition], that the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, ‘Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!’?”

5.5 Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, this venerable Upavāṇa has been the Blessed One’s personal attendant for a long time, always near at hand and available. What is the reason, what is the cause [condition], that the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, ‘Move aside, monk, do not stand in front of me!’?”

“Ānanda, the devatas [gods] of the 10 world-bases⁷⁴⁸ have gathered in great numbers to see the Tathāgata. Ānanda, for 12 yojanas [leagues]⁷⁴⁹ around the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas near Kusinārā, there is not a spot even the size of the pricking tip of a hair that is not filled by a mighty devata.⁷⁵⁰ Ānanda, the devatas are upset [murmuring in protest], saying:

“We have come from afar just for the sight of the Tathāgata. Very rarely⁷⁵¹ do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world, and tonight in the last watch, the Tathāgata will attain parinirvana.

But this mighty monk⁷⁵² stands right in front of the Blessed One, obstructing the view. We will not be able to have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time [in his last hour]!” Thus, Ānanda, the devatas are upset [murmuring in protest].”

The devas lament⁷⁵³

5.6 “But, bhante, what kinds of devatas is the Blessed One considering?”

“There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in the sky [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the air];⁷⁵⁴ lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; [140] fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁷⁵⁵ rolling to and fro, crying:

credit (D 29,41/3:141), SD 40a.6. Here, Upavāṇa is again seen fanning the Buddha in his last days. See SD 47.15 (2.4.2); also CPD sv.

⁷⁴⁵ See above §1.4n where Ānanda fans the Buddha.

⁷⁴⁶ “Dismissed,” reading *apasāreti* (Be), which Comy glosses as *apanesi* (DA 2:579); vl *apasādeti*, “he rebukes” [PTS *apasādesi*, 2nd sg].

⁷⁴⁷ “Personal attendant...available,” *upaṭṭhāko santikāvacarō samīpa,cārī*, lit “a personal attendant who moves in the vicinity, who wanders nearby.”

⁷⁴⁸ “10 world-spheres,” *dasa loka,dhātu*, here Comys gloss as *dasa,sahassa,cakkavāla* (the ten-thousandfold universe) (DA 2:678; SA 1:74). Cosmology: “The world (*loka*) in its broadest sense includes the whole cosmos, but within this there are smaller units known as ‘world-systems’ (*loka,dhātu*), which corresponds roughly to solar systems. Such a unit consists of the sun and moon, Mt Meru, four continents, four oceans, the 4 great kings (*loka,pāla, catur.mahā,rāja*), and the seven-fold heavenly spheres. One thousand of these units together forms a ‘small world system,’ and the ‘medium’ and ‘large’ systems are each one thousand times greater than the one below. These larger world systems correspond to the modern concept of a galaxy. The cosmos is believed to be infinite in space and also in time, although it passes through immense cycles of revolution and decline. In the post-canonical period of Pāli literature, the term *loka,dhātu* is replaced by *cakka,-vāla* (Skt *cakra,vāla*), and more elaborate details are added to the traditional accounts.” (*Dictionary of Buddhism*, 2003).

⁷⁴⁹ “Leagues” (*yojana*). A *yojana* is the yoke of an Indian plough (J 6:38, 42). As distance, it is as far as can be covered by a yoke of oxen, ie, about 11.25 km or 7 mi (DhA 1:108, 2:13). Thus, “twelve yojanas” is about 130 km = 84 mi.

⁷⁵⁰ In **Sama,citta Vagga** of the Āṅuttara, the Buddha tells Sāriputta that “ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty devas” could comfortably stand on the end of a hair (A 2:65, qu at DA 2:579). Cf A 3:402; SA 1:74. “It is most curious to find this exact analogy to the notorious discussion as to how many angels could stand on the point of a needle in a commentary written at just that period of Buddhist history that corresponds to the Middle Ages of Christendom.” (D:RD 2:151n). The actual quote is “how many angels can dance on the point of a very fine needle, without jostling one another.” Amongst the earliest to quote this were *Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation* (1638, repr 1972, 12th unnumbered p of pref) & Isaac D’Israeli (“Curiosities of Literature,” 1791).

⁷⁵¹ “Very rarely,” *kadāci karahaci*, lit “perhaps sometimes.”

⁷⁵² Comy says that the devatas are unable to see through Upavāṇa because the elder’s “greatness and abundance of *teja* (‘heat, radiance, glory),” that were a result of the fact that in a former life he was a guardian devata of the caitya of the relics of Kassapa Buddha (DA 579 f). On darshan, see **Intro (7.5)** above.

⁷⁵³ This whole section repeats in §6.11, in Anuruddha’s mouth.

⁷⁵⁴ “Devatas who perceive earth in the sky,” *devatā ākāse paṭhavī,saññīniyo*. Comy: Having perceived earth, they project earth right there in the air (*ākāse paṭhavīm mapetvā tattha paṭhavī,saññīniyo*, DA 2:579). See n in §5.6b below. This is a difficult passage to translate: see eg Ray 1994:362, where Reginald Ray tr *paṭhavi,saññīniyo* as “of worldly mind.”

‘Too soon will the Blessed One enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Sugata [Wellfarer] enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Eye in the world⁷⁵⁶ disappear!’

5.6.2 There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in earth [who assume a gross form so that they can stand on the ground];⁷⁵⁷ lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁷⁵⁸ rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon will the Blessed One enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Sugata [Wellfarer] enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Eye in the world disappear!’

But those devatas that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,
‘Impermanent are formations! Ānanda, how else could it be?’⁷⁵⁹

The 4 Holy Places



←Lumbinī
Bodhgayā→
Sarnath ↓
↓Kusinārā



No pavāranā ceremony⁷⁶⁰

5.7 [Ānanda:] ‘Before, bhante, the monks who have spent their rains residence in various districts will come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata, and we will receive them, we will receive those esteemed⁷⁶¹ monks who have come for a darshan [seeing the Tathāgata] and wait upon them.’⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁵ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādaṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna-* *papātam papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna,pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁷⁵⁶ “The Eye in the world,” *cakkhum loke*. See Intro (7.6) on “the 5 eyes.”

⁷⁵⁷ They are devas like the Brahmās who are unable prop themselves up when appearing on earth. Comy (DA 2:581) mentions the (Brahmā) **Hatthaka** (A 3.125) that relates an incident when the devaputra Hatthaka is unable to stand in the presence of the Buddha. The Buddha instructs him to project a gross (*oḷārika*) body form so that the earth could hold him up. Similarly, **Jana,vasabha S** (D 18.17) relates the case of the Brahmā **Sanañ,kumāra**, whose form was too subtle to be perceived by the devas of the Heaven of the Thirty-three. So he had to assume a gross form so that they could see him (D 18.17/2:210).

⁷⁵⁸ See n at §5.6.1 above.

⁷⁵⁹ *Taṃ kut’ ettha labbhā?* Lit, “What can you get here?” As at §§3.48, 6.11 below.

⁷⁶⁰ The following section [§§5.7-9] are not found in the Tibetan Dulva account.

⁷⁶¹ “Worthy of esteemed” and “esteemed,” *mano,bhāvaniyā* or *-bhāvaniyā*, often used in apposition with *bhikkhū* (D 2:140; M 2:23, 3:36, 3:261; S 3:1, 5:369, 371; A 3:317-322 (22□), 5:185, 189; Vv 34.13/49; Miln 129); used of the Buddha, *mano,bhāvaniyam buddham*, at **Sovaṇṇa,kattarika Ap** (Ap 427.1/2:389). SA comments that “those great elders such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna are called ‘worthy of esteem because the mind grows in wholesome qualities whenever they are seen’” (SA 2:249 f). See DA 3:832; MA 3:17, 266. **Bodhi** notes that “the expression is a gerundive meaning literally ‘who should be brought to mind,’ ie who are worthy of esteem” (S:B 1043 n2). **Sadda,nīti** (Dhātu,mālā), however, gives both <http://dharmafarer.org>

The 4 holy places

5.8 ⁷⁶³ Ānanda, there are these four places that should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency]. ⁷⁶⁴ What are the four? ⁷⁶⁵

(1) Thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata was born,**” Ānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].

(2) Thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata attained supreme awakening,**” Ānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].

(3) Thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata turned the Wheel of the Dharma,**” Ānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].

(4) Thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata attained the nirvana-element without residue,**” ⁷⁶⁶ Ānanda, the place should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency]. [141]

Ānanda, these are the 4 places that should be seen by the faithful son of family so as to rouse samvega [a sense of urgency].

5.8.2 Ānanda, the faithful monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen, too, may visit those places, thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata was born,**”

thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata attained supreme awakening,**”

thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata turned the Wheel of the Dharma,**”

thinking, “**Here the Tathāgata attained the nirvana-element without residue.**”

5.8.3 Anyone who dies with a calm and bright heart of faith ⁷⁶⁷ while making a pilgrimage of these shrines, ⁷⁶⁸ at the breaking up of the body after death, is reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world.

Women

5.9 ⁷⁶⁹ “Bhante, how are we to conduct ourselves towards women?”

“By not looking at them, Ānanda.”

“But if we see them, bhante, how should we behave?”

“By not speaking to them, Ānanda.”

“But if they speak to us, bhante, how should we behave towards them?”

“Then, Ānanda, be mindful [maintain mindfulness]!” ⁷⁷⁰

meanings of *mano, bhāvanīya*: (1) one who is worthy of being greeted and asked after his health; (2) one who develops his mind (Sadd:Be 330).

⁷⁶² Here Ānanda is referring to the most common event after Invitation, that ends the rains residence on the following dawn, when the monks would leave their rains residence and if the Buddha was nearby, visit him. Interestingly, no Invitation ceremony is mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S. See §3.51n on the Invitation.

⁷⁶³ This § [5.8] as at **Saṃvega S** (A 4.118/2:120), addressed to “monks.”

⁷⁶⁴ *Cattār’ imāni Ānanda saddhassa kula, puttassa dassanīyāni saṃvejanīyāni ṭhānāni*. On samvega, see (7.6).

⁷⁶⁵ The following are **the 4 holy places** “that arouse samvega [spiritual urgency]” (*saṃvejanīya-t, ṭhāna/saṃvejanīya, -sthāna*) that are worthy of pilgrimage are: Lumbinī (modern Rummidei, Nepal), Uruvela/Uruvilvā (Buddha Gayā), Isi,patana/Rṣi,patana (modern Sarnath) and Kusinārā/Kuśinagarī. In the account of the 8 causes of earth-tremors (D 2:107-109) [§§3.11-20], causes 4, 5, 6, and 8 are respectively those in connection with the events of the four holy places [§§3.16, 17, 18, 20], that is, (4) Lumbinī (J 1:52), (5) Buddha, gayā (J 1:76), (7) Isi,patana (V 1:10), and (8) Kusinārā (D 2:137). Faxian records that there was a great pagoda at each of these four sites, that is, about the 5th century CE (Giles tr, 1923:56). On pilgrimage, see (7.7).

⁷⁶⁶ “The nirvana-element without residue” (*anupādisesa nibbāna, dhātu*), ie the final passing away of an arhat without any remnants of the 5 aggregates, where all physical and mental processes truly do not further arise. Note esp the usage of *upadi* here: see Intro (15.2) above.

⁷⁶⁷ “With a calm and bright heart of faith,” *pasanna, citta*, alt tr “with a clear mind of faith.” On *pasanna, citta*, see Intro (7.8).

⁷⁶⁸ “While making a pilgrimage of these shrines,” *cetiya, carikam āhiṇḍantā*, lit “while wandering on a walking-tour of these shrines.” “**Shrines,**” *cetiya*. We have here what some would regard as the basis for stupa worship: see **Intro (7.3)** for the nature of stupa worship & (7.8) for its benefits. Cf **Vatthūpama S** (M 7,20/1:39), SD 28.12 (7.8).

⁷⁶⁹ This episode is apparently an arbitrary and incongruous interpolation in the otherwise smooth narrative flow of the sutta. The Skt & Tibetan versions do not have this episode, attesting to its lateness. On a more positive note regarding women, see (**Piṇḍola**) **Bhāradvāja S** (S 35.127 = 4:110 f), SD 27.6a.

⁷⁷⁰ *Sati Ānanda upaṭṭhāpetabbā ti*, lit “Mindfulness, Ānanda, should be set up.” On mental training to deal with sexuality, see **Saññoga S** (A 7.48/4:57-59): sense-desire is not in the attractions out there but within ourselves; **Koṭṭhita S** (S 35.232/4:162-165): lustful desire is not in any of the six senses, but in how we engage them. The Central Asian version (Waldschmidt) omits this episode, but it is found in DĀ (T1.1), EĀ, and T1.7 versions. See Bareau 1971:34 f; Matsumura 1988

Treatment of the Buddha's remains

5.10 “Bhante, how are we to treat the Tathāgata’s bodily remains?”⁷⁷¹

“Do not worry yourselves about **the funeral rites** [relic worship],⁷⁷² Ānanda. Come now, Ānanda, you should strive for your own good, devote yourselves to your own good, and dwell with your minds tirelessly, zealously devoted to your own good.⁷⁷³ There are wise kshatriyas, wise brahmins and wise houselords who are devoted to the Tathāgata: they will take care of the funeral rites.”

5.11 ⁷⁷⁴“But how, bhante, should the Tathāgata’s bodily remains be treated?”⁷⁷⁵

“Ānanda, treat the Tathāgata’s bodily remains like those of a wheel-turning king’s.”⁷⁷⁶

5.11.2 “But how, bhante, are the bodily remains of a world-turning king to be treated?”

“Ānanda, the body⁷⁷⁷ should be wrapped alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then with a layer of teased cotton.⁷⁷⁸ **[142]** It should be done in this manner to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths],⁷⁷⁹ and then the body is placed in an oil-vat of iron.⁷⁸⁰ This should be covered with an iron lid. The pyre should comprise totally of fragrant material, and then cremate the body. Then **a stupa** [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the wheel-turning king at the crossroads [where four highways meet].⁷⁸¹

chart IV. On ordination of nuns, see Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics*, 2000: 383-391. On position of women in early Buddhism, see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004: 9.5-6 + SD 1.9: “Nuns before Mahā Pajāpati?” (2003).

⁷⁷¹ *Katham mayam bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre patipajjāmā ti*. “Bodily remains,” *sarīre*, neut acc pl: see §5.11a n. “The ‘we’ here would appear to refer to some, if not all, of the Buddha’s fellow renunciants” (Trainor 1997:52 f). Cf Ānanda’s next question which is more impersonal [§5.11 & n]. On defs of *sarīra*, see **Intro (7.4)** above.

⁷⁷² “Funeral rites,” *sarīra.pūja*, lit “worship of the bodily remains.” The Buddha here is indirectly reminding Ānanda of the need of his own spiritual cultivation (ie to gain arhathood since he is still a streamwinner). However, the general tone of the Buddha’s reply, as is clear from the next sentence, is that all monastics should not be concerned with such rituals. See **Intro (7.1)**.

⁷⁷³ “Your own good,” *sad-atthe*. Be *sār’atthe*, “the essence of good; the essential goal” Ānanda is still only a streamwinner, and the Buddha is here urging him to work for the “highest good,” viz, arhathood (*uttam’atthe arahatte ghaṭetha*) (DA 2:583).

⁷⁷⁴ This § [11] as at §6.17 (D 2:161) below where the Mallas ask for instructions from Ānanda regarding how to treat the Buddha’s remains.

⁷⁷⁵ *Katham pana bhante Tathāgatassa sarīre patipajjitabban ti*. “Bodily remains,” *sarīre*, neut acc pl: see §5.10 n. Note that *mayam* (we) has been omitted here and the question is impersonal (“an unspecified agent,” Trainor 1997: 53). Comy says that Ānanda asks this question because he knew that the kshatriyas, brahmins and houselords would ask him what to do (DA 583): and in fact they did [§6.17].

⁷⁷⁶ On the wheel-turning king, see §5.18 below.

⁷⁷⁷ “Body,” *sarīram*, here neut nom sg. See §6.23.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ahatena vatthena veṭhetvā vihatena kappāsena veṭhenti* (D 16,5.11/2:141). See **Intro (7.1)**.

⁷⁷⁹ *Etena upāyena pañcahi yuga,satehi* (D 16,5.11/2:142). A yuga is about 1.8 m (5.9 ft), and 500 yugas would be 900 m (984 yd). See §6.13.2 above & **(7.1)**. Apparently, all the better known English trs (Rhys Davids, Walshe, Vajirā & Story, and Thanissaro) overlooked or mistranslated *yuga*. See §6.13 below.

⁷⁸⁰ “Iron,” *ayasa*, vl *āyasa*. In Skt, it means “gold,” so glossed by Comy (DA 2:583). However, it is only here that *ayasa* is rendered as “gold.” This could be because, due to the popularity of Sanskrit in his times (5th cent), Buddhaghosa was influenced by it. As regards the dimension of the iron vat, understandably, the final size of the remains wrapped in alternate layers of cotton cloth and teased cotton should fit this iron vat and then closed with its lid. See J S Strong 2004:109 f.

⁷⁸¹ *Cātum,mahā,pathe rañño cakkavattissa thūpam karonti*. **Note that neither *sarīram* nor *sarīre* is mentioned**: see foll n. The ref to crossroads [“where four highroads meet”] (*cātum,mahā,pathe*) has at least two levels of meaning. The first meaning has been discussed by RA Gunatilaka in “Ancient Stūpa Architecture: The significance of cardinal points and the cātummahāpatha concept” (1975:34-48), where the allusion is to the universal hegemony of the *cakkavatī* or wheel-turning king. Here “where the four highroads meet” refers to the city centre where the highways converge; as such, this is the city’s most prominent spot. In the Dharma sense, the Buddha is a “wheel-turner” but the wheel is the *dharma,cakra* (*dhamma,-cakka*), the wheel of truth, and not the *ājñā,cakra* (*āñā,cakka*), the wheel of power. The second meaning is more common in the suttas. In **Dhamma,ceṭiya S** (M 89), for example, the rajah Pasenadī praises the Buddha regarding how the Sangha members are so well disciplined “with neither rod nor sword” (M 89.13/2:122). In **Aṅgulimāla S** (M 86), the rajah again makes the same praise in reference to how the Buddha has tamed the bloodthirsty bandit, Aṅgulimāla, “with neither rod

5.11.3 Ānanda, just as one treats the remains of a wheel-turning king, even so, one should treat the remains of the Tathāgata. Then a stupa [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the Tathāgata at the crossroads [where four highways meet].⁷⁸² And they who offer a garland, scent, or perfume powder, or bow down there, or brighten their minds with faith there, it will be for their profit and welfare for a long time to come.

Those worthy of a stupa

5.12 ⁷⁸³Ānanda, there are these four who are worthy of a stupa.⁷⁸⁴ Who are the four?

The Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one is worthy of a stupa.

A pratyeka Buddha is worthy of a stupa.

A disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata is worthy of a stupa.

A wheel-turning king is worthy of a stupa.

(1) And because of what reason, Ānanda, is **the Tathāgata**, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought,

‘This is the stupa of the Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, the Tathāgata, the arhat [worthy one], the fully self-awakened one, is worthy of a stupa.

(2) And for what reason, Ānanda, is **a pratyeka buddha**⁷⁸⁵ worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought,

‘This is the stupa of a pratyeka buddha,’ the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a pratyeka buddha is worthy of a stupa.

(3) And for what reason, Ānanda, is **a disciple [saint]** of the Tathāgata worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought,

‘This is the stupa of a disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata,’ the heart of the many brightens with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a disciple [saint] of the Tathāgata is worthy of a stupa.

(4) And for what reason, Ānanda, is **a wheel-turning monarch** [a just world ruler]⁷⁸⁶ worthy of a stupa?

Because, Ānanda, at the thought,

‘This is the stupa of a wheel-turning king,’ the hearts of the many brighten with faith, and then, at the breaking up of the body after death, they are reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world. For this reason, Ānanda, a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a stupa.

These, Ānanda, are the four who are worthy of a stupa.”⁷⁸⁷

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[fear] nor sword [force]” (M 86,14a/2:102). This is an example of the difference between the “wheel of power” (*ānā,cakka*), ie the sphere of political power, and the “wheel of truth” (*dhamma,cakka*), the realm of the Dharma (VA 10 = KhA 1:95; MA 2:278; ThaA 3:48).

⁷⁸² *Cātum,mahā,pathe Tathāgatassa thūpaṃ karonti.* Note again that here too neither *sarīraṃ* nor *sarīre* is mentioned, in other words, no relics are mentioned as interred in such a stupa: see prev n. In the Tibetan Dulva account, this episode comes after the Upavāna episode (after the Mahā Sudassana story), and where it says that the *cakka,vatti*’s pyre should be put out with milk, and only a Buddha and a *cakkavatti* are worthy of a stupa (Rockhill 1884: 137).

⁷⁸³ This §12 as at **Thūpāraha S** (A 4.245/2:245 f).

⁷⁸⁴ On the stupa, see (7.3).

⁷⁸⁵ **Pratyeka buddha, pacceka,buddha.** A “solitary” or “hermit” Buddha, who usually remains in seclusion and does not teach the Dharma to others. The wisdom of the fully self-awakened one (*sammā,sambuddha*) is far greater than that of the Pratyeka Buddha, who usually arise during a time when there is no fully self-awakened one.

⁷⁸⁶ On the “wheel-turning monarch” (*cakkavatti*), see S J Tambiah, “The Buddhist conception of universal king and its manifestations in south and southeast Asia,” 1987.

⁷⁸⁷ While stupas could and had been built for the Buddha and his saint disciples (from archaeological finds), it is difficult to imagine building stupas for pratyeka Buddhas and a wheel-turning king. The former only appear when there are no fully self-awakened Buddhas, in which case it would be difficult (though not impossible) to recognize them then. As for wheel-turning kings, it is almost impossible to find one in real life. Clearly this is a late interpolation. It is useful here to reflect on the Buddha’s stanzas to Sundarika Bhāradvāja (**Vatthūpama S**, M 7.20/1:39): see Intro (7.8) above.

Ānanda's grief

5.13 ⁷⁸⁸Then the venerable Ānanda went into the monks' lodging [vihara]⁷⁸⁹ and stood lamenting, leaning against the door-bolt, weeping.⁷⁹⁰

“Alas! I am still a learner⁷⁹¹ with much more to do! And the Teacher is attaining parinirvana—**he who is so kind to me!**”

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks,

“Where, bhikshus, is Ānanda?”

“Bhante, the venerable Ānanda is in the monks' lodging [vihara], standing lamenting, leaning against the door-post, weeping.”

Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk:

“Go, monk, and call Ānanda in my name, saying:⁷⁹²

‘Avuso,⁷⁹³ the Teacher calls you.’” [144]

“Yes, bhante,” the monk replied in assent to the Blessed One. He approached the venerable Ānanda and then said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Avuso, the Teacher calls you.”

“Yes, avuso,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the monk.

The venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, and having saluted him, sat down at one side.

The Buddha consoles Ānanda

5.14 Seated thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Enough, Ānanda, do not grieve! Do not weep! Have I not told you before: ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]?⁷⁹⁴ What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.’⁷⁹⁵

For a long time, Ānanda, you have been in the Tathāgata's presence ever ready to serve,⁷⁹⁶ showing lovingkindness through bodily deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly, through verbal deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly, and through mental deeds, helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly.⁷⁹⁷

You have gained much merit, Ānanda. Keep up your effort and you will swiftly be free from the mental influxes.”⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁸⁸ Winternitz (1939:9) says that these 2 sections [§5.13 f] are amongst those that “bear the stamp of the greatest antiquity.” See also §§2.23 & 2.25.

⁷⁸⁹ Although *vihāra* may be an abstract n referring to a way of dwelling, here it refers to a physical residence, eg, a hut or cottage. As the scene here is in the Upavattana sal grove, it “would seem to point to the fact that this episode originally stood in some other connexion” (D:RD 2:157 n2). Buddhaghosa explains that *vihāra* here refers to a *maṇḍala, māla* (DA 2:584), ie, “a circular house or hall with a peaked roof, a pavilion” (DPL), where the clan performs its communal ceremonies. See foll n, where it is said to be a “garden shed” (*uyyāna, ovaraka*, J 307/3:23).

⁷⁹⁰ The Buddha, it is said, tells **Palāsa J** (J 307), in this connection with Ānanda's grieving at “the door-bolt of the garden shed” (*uyyāna, ovarake kapi, sīsām*). The story is about how a poor brahmin faithfully worships a tree-deity, who reward him by presenting him with hidden treasure.⁷⁹⁰ The moral of the story is clearly alludes to Ānanda's devotion to the Buddha.

⁷⁹¹ “Learner” (*sekha*), ie a saint who has not attained the arhat-path (ie one is a streamwinner, a once-returner, or a non-returner). Ānanda is still a streamwinner. See the conditions of non-decline at §1.7(7).

⁷⁹² *Ehi tvam bhikkhu mama vacanena Ānandaṃ amantehi*, lit “Go you, monk, address Ānanda with my word.”

⁷⁹³ *Avuso*: see §6.2 n.

⁷⁹⁴ This famous sentence is stock: D 2:118=114=158=163; **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 2:192=194); **Cunda S** (S 5:163); Nm 1:123 qu D 16,5.14/2:144. Cf **Abhiṅha, paccavekhitabba S** (A 3:74).

⁷⁹⁵ This nested quote is stock: D 16,3.48/2:118=16,5.14/144=16,6.11a/158=16,6.20/163.

⁷⁹⁶ “In the Tathāgata's presence ever ready to serve,” *Tathāgato paccupaṭṭhito*. Ānanda has served the Buddha for 25 years at this point. See Tha 1041-1043.

⁷⁹⁷ “Helpfully, happily, forthrightly and unstintingly,” *hitena sukhena advayena appamāṇena*.

⁷⁹⁸ It is interesting to note that in **Upatissa S** (S 21.2), Sāriputta actually hints to Ānanda regarding the passing away of the Buddha: “Avuso, even if the Teacher himself were to undergo change and become other, still sorrow, lamentation, pain, <http://dharmafarer.org>

Valediction to Ānanda⁷⁹⁹

5.15⁸⁰⁰ Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Bhikshus, all those who were arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones in the past have had no better attendants, that is to say, just like Ānanda. So too will those arhats [worthy ones], fully self-awakened ones to come will have no better attendants, that is to say, just like Ānanda.⁸⁰¹

Bhikshus, Ānanda is wise.⁸⁰² He knows,

‘This is the right time for the monks to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;

‘This is the right time for the nuns to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;

‘This is the right time for the men lay-followers to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’; [145]

‘This is the right time for the women lay-followers to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata’;

‘This is the right time for the kings, the ministers, the outside teachers, the disciples of outside teachers, to come for a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata.’

Ānanda’s charisma

5.16⁸⁰³ Ānanda, bhikshus, has **these 4 wonderful and marvellous qualities**. What are the four?⁸⁰⁴

(1) If an assembly of monks comes to *see* Ānanda, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if Ānanda *talks* on the Dharma to an assembly of monks, they are pleased with the talk;
but when Ānanda is *silent*, they are disappointed.

(2) If an assembly of nuns comes to *see* Ānanda, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if Ānanda *talks* on the Dharma to an assembly of nuns, they are pleased with the talk;
but when Ānanda is *silent*, they are disappointed.

(3) If an assembly of men lay-followers comes to *see* Ānanda, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if Ānanda *talks* on the Dharma to an assembly of men lay-followers, they are pleased with the talk;
but when Ānanda is *silent*, they are disappointed.

(4) If an assembly of women lay-followers comes to *see* Ānanda, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if Ānanda *talks* on the Dharma to an assembly of women lay-followers, they are pleased with the talk;
but when Ānanda is *silent*, they are disappointed.

These 4 wonderful and marvellous qualities, bhikshus, are those of **a wheel-turning king** [a just world ruler]:

(1) If a company of kshatriyas visits a wheel-turning king, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if the wheel-turning king *talks*, they are pleased at the talk;
but when the wheel-turning king is *silent*, they are disappointed.

(2) If a company of brahmins visits a wheel-turning king, they are pleased at the sight of him;
and if the wheel-turning king *talks*, they are pleased at the talk;
but when the wheel-turning king is *silent*, they are disappointed.

displeasure and despair would not arise in me. However, it would occur to me: “The Teacher, so influential, so powerful, so mighty, has passed away. But if the Blessed One had lived for a long time, that would have been for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of devas and humans!” (S 21.2/2:274)

⁷⁹⁹ The next 3 sections [§§5.15-17] are not found in the Tibetan Dulva version.

⁸⁰⁰ The 2 parts of this section (D 16.5.15-16/2:144 f) are found separately in (**Ānanda**) **Achariya S 3** (A 4.129/2:132) on Ānanda’s charisma & (**Ānanda**) **Acchariya S 4** (A 4.130/2:133) on the charisma of the wheel-turning king. Cf teachings on spiritual friendship at S 5:16.

⁸⁰¹ In other words, Ānanda is the ideal Buddha attendant. The Buddha’s loving but ironic humour is evident here. There is only one Gotama Buddha and only one Ānanda, and as such, he we are not going to see another on with the likes of him.

⁸⁰² Although Ānanda is here stated as being wise in public relations and protocol, he is also the foremost amongst monks who are learned (*bahussuta*) (A 1:24). See eg (**Ānanda**) **Adhamma S** (A 10.115/5:225-229). On Ānanda’s wisdom, see also SA 2:94 f.

⁸⁰³ This [§5.16] is found in **Abbhuta Dhamma S 3** (A 4.129/2:132); but not found in the Tibetan Dulva.

⁸⁰⁴ It is highly probable that Ānanda is declared the foremost amongst monks who are *gatimantānam* in this connection (A 1:25). As such, we can tr *gatimanta* or *gatimā* is “one who knows the course of things,” ie perspicacious in protocol: cf AA 1:287. Comys, however, generally gloss *gatima* as “possessed of understanding”: “Accomplished in peerless understanding,” *gatimanto’ti asadisāya nāṇa, gatiyā samannāgato* (ThaA 3:121,9); “wise, meaning with wisdom, accomplished in understanding,” *paṇḍitā’ti paṇḍiccena samannāgtā gatimantā* (VA 552,24). See DP sv

- (3) If a company of houselords visits a wheel-turning king,
and if the wheel-turning king talks,
but when the wheel-turning king is silent,
they are pleased at the sight of him;
they are pleased at the talk;
they are disappointed.
- (4) If a company of recluses visits a wheel-turning king,
and if the wheel-turning king talks,
but when the wheel-turning king is silent,
they are pleased at the sight of him;
they are pleased at the talk;
they are disappointed. [146]

Even so, bhikshus, these four wonderful and marvellous qualities are found in Ānanda:

If any of the fourfold companies comes to see Ānanda, it will be pleased to see him, it will be pleased when he talks on Dharma, but will be disappointed if he is silent.

Bhikshus, these are four wonderful and marvellous qualities found in Ānanda.⁸⁰⁵

KUSINĀRĀ AND THE MALLAS

Kusinārā

5.17⁸⁰⁶ Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:⁸⁰⁷

“Bhante, please do not pass into parinirvana in this little township, a barren little township, a jungle outpost.

There are, bhante, other great cities, that is to say, Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvathī, Sāketa, Kosambī, Benares. Pass into parinirvana there, bhante; there are many wealthy kshatriyas there, many wealthy brahmins there, many wealthy houselords there who are great in faith in the Tathāgātā. They will perform the funeral rites of the Tathāgata.”

“Say not so, Ānanda! Say not so, Ānanda, that **Kusinārā** is a little township, a barren little township, a jungle outpost.

5.18 MAHĀ SUDASSANA & KUSĀ,VĀTĪ.⁸⁰⁸ Once upon a time, Ānanda, there was a rajah named **Mahā Sudassana**, a wheel-turning king, a just rightful king, conqueror of the four quarters, who brought stability to the country,⁸⁰⁹ who was endowed with the 7 jewels [treasures].⁸¹⁰ This Kusinārā, Ānanda, was the rajah Mahā Sudassana’s royal city named **Kusā,vatī**: it was⁸¹¹ 12 yojanas long⁸¹² from the east to the west and 7 yojanas wide⁸¹³ from the north to the south.⁸¹⁴

⁸⁰⁵ As at (**Cakka,vatti**) **Abbhuta Dhamma S** (A 4.130), but the two sections are reversed, with the wheel-turner being mentioned first (A 4.130/2:133), SD 36.10(2.1). Very likely it is such passages [§§5.15-16] that constitutes “marvels” (*abbhuta,dhamma*), rather than miraculous stories: see eg **Abbhuta Dhamma Ss** mentioned in the §§ nn. It is possible to incl lion-roars (*sīha,nāda*) here, too: see SD 36.10 (3). See also Ency Bsm: Aṅga (under abbhutadhamma).

⁸⁰⁶ The foll 2 §§ [5.17-18] are as at **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.1-3/2:169 f), where the §§ are expanded on. This episode is not found in the Tibetan Dulva version.

⁸⁰⁷ This incident of Ānanda’s remark regarding Kusinārā is recounted in the Intro to **Mahā Sudassana S** (M 17.1-3/2:169 f) & **Mahā Sudassana J** (J 95/1:391). See also **Gomaya S** (S 22.96), where Mahā Sudassana is referred to as a “head-anointed kshatriya rajah” (*rājā...khattiyo muddhāvasitto*) (S 22.96/3:144).

⁸⁰⁸ The Udāna Comy gives 3 reasons why the Buddha chooses to pass away in Kusi,nārā, ie (1) it would be the occasion for teaching **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17), SD 36.12; (2) the wanderer’s Subhadda’s conversion, and (3) the brahmin Doṇa would fairly distribute his relics, thus preventing a bloodshed (UA 402). See (**Pāda**) **Doṇa S** (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).

⁸⁰⁹ *Janapada-t,thāvariya-p,patto*, see DA 1:250, 2:443; MA 3:365; SA 1:167; SnA 2:449.

⁸¹⁰ On the 7 jewels (*satta ratanā*) of the wheel-turning king—the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem-jewel, the woman-jewel, the houselord jewel, the commander jewel—see **Bāla,paṇḍita S** (M 129,33-41/3:172-176), SD 2.22.

⁸¹¹ The rest of the sentence: *Puratthimena ca pacchimena ca dvādasa yojanāni, āyāmena uttarena ca dakkhiṇena ca satta yojanāni vitthārena*.

⁸¹² About 135 km (84 mi) long.

⁸¹³ About 79 km (49 mi) wide.

⁸¹⁴ As a whole, 24 yojanas (about 135 km) long in latitude and 14 yojanas (79 km) wide in longitude. *Rañño Ānanda Mahā,sudassanassa ayaṃ Kusinārā Kusāvati nāma rājadhāni ahoṣi, puratthimena ca pacchimena ca dvādasa yojanāni āyāmena, uttarena ca dakkhiṇena ca satta yojanāni vitthārena*.

And, Ānanda, the royal city of Kusāvati was wealthy and prosperous, [147] with a large population, crowded with humans and replete with food. Ānanda, it is like the celestial city of the devas called **Āḷakamandā**,⁸¹⁵ wealthy and prosperous, with a large population, crowded with yakshas and replete with food. Even so, Ānanda, was the royal city of Kusāvati wealthy and prosperous, with a large population, crowded with humans and replete with food.

And Ānanda, the royal city of Kusāvati, night and day will resound with 10 sounds, that is to say, elephant sound, horse sound, chariot sound, drum sound, mirutangkam [barrel drum]⁸¹⁶ sound, veena⁸¹⁷ sound, the sound of singing, cymbal sound, gong sound, and the sound of ‘Enjoy! Drink! Eat!’ [‘Eat, drink and be merry!’]. These are the 10 sounds.⁸¹⁸

The Mallas of Kusinārā

5.19 ⁸¹⁹Go, Ānanda, into Kusinārā and announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā, thus:

‘Vāseṭṭhas,⁸²⁰ the parinirvana of the Tathāgata will occur during the last watch tonight. Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Come out, Vāseṭṭhas!⁸²¹ Regret not later,⁸²² saying,

“The parinirvana of the Tathāgata occurred within the confines of our own village, but we did not have a - darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time!””

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One, and having dressed himself, carrying his robe and bowl, entered Kusinārā with a companion.

5.20 Now at that time, the Mallas of Kusinārā were gathered in their assembly hall attending to some business. Then the venerable Ānanda went to the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā, and announced to them thus:

“Vāseṭṭhas, the parinirvana of the Tathāgata will occur during the last watch tonight. Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Come out, Vāseṭṭhas! Regret not later, saying,

“The parinirvana of the Tathāgata occurred within the confines of our own village, [148] but we did not have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata for the last time!””

⁸¹⁵ **Āḷakamandā** was the royal city of Kuvera, the king of Uttara, kuru, the northern continent (D 3:201). It is possible that this was an allusion to Alexandria, of which there were at least 11 ancient cities founded by Alexander the Great in the course of his campaigns (334-323 BCE). Alexandria on the Indus, founded in 325 near the confluence of the Indus river with the Hydaspes, Acesines and Hyphasis rivers, perhaps identifiable with Uch, in Bahāwalpur (Pakistan). Alexandria in Gedrosia, founded in 325: the modern Bela, in Pakistan. Both of these cities were to the “north” of the Gangetic plain. If this allusion were made, then this portion of the sutta was added just before or during Asoka’s reign (c 265-238 BCE or c 273-232). Cf **Cakka, vatti Sīha, nāda S** (D 26) prediction of India and Ketu, maṭī in the distant future (D 26.23/3:76).

⁸¹⁶ “Mirutangkam,” *mutiṅga*, vl *mutiṅga* (Skt *mṛdaṅga*, lit “body of clay”), a double-headed Indian barrel drum, the modern *mridanga*. As at **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 1.2.90/2:79), where *bheri...mutiṅga* are mentioned. A *mṛdaṅga* is a barrel-shaped drum played horizontally with the hands beating both ends. Comy says that the drum, made from the claw of a giant crab, made a sound that could be heard for 12 leagues (135 km) around to summon the people to assemble on festival days (SA 2:228). The *mridangas* have stretched skin with a central circle of black paste that gives a different playing surface. In north India, it is called *pakhwaj*. The *mridangam* is today used in most Carnatic (south of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh) concerts as accompaniment to both vocal and instrumental performances. Also called *saṅgīta maddalam*, it is believed to be the oldest of all percussion instruments. A *bheri* is a small conical drum. See **Āṇi S** (S 20.7/ 2:266 f), SD 7.7 for n & picture.

⁸¹⁷ “Veena,” *vīṇā*, Hindi “bīn,” a family of Indian stringed instruments, basically stick zither, having a narrow neck, neckless, non-resonating body with strings running the entire length. Veenas [Vinas], usually 7-stringed and fretted, appear in many sizes and shapes. The classical vina of northern Indian (Hindustani) music, a difficult solo instrument, has a large resonating gourd under each end of body and high, movable frets. Veena may also refer generically to stringed instruments. Before about 1000, it may have referred to an arched harp. (Ency Brit 15th ed)

⁸¹⁸ In the Tibetan Dulva account, the Upavāṇa episode is inserted here (Rockhill 1884:136 f) where Upavāṇa’s former life is recounted (f 608-609).

⁸¹⁹ The following sections [§§5.19-26]—the impending parinirvana announced to the Mallas & Subhadda’s visit— are unique to this Sutta.

⁸²⁰ Vāseṭṭha (Skt Vāsiṣṭha). This was the gotra (*gotta*) or clan name of the Mallas of Kusinārā and of Pāvā. The clan was held in high esteem (V 4:8). The clan probably traced its descent to the sage Vāsiṣṭha (V 1:245; D 1:104; M 2:164, 200).

⁸²¹ “Come out...come out!” *abhikkamatha...abhikkamatha* (PTS *abhikkhamatha* is wr), or “approach...approach!”; also tr as “advance... advance!” This is stock phrase for summoning someone: *abhikkama* (imper 2nd sg): V 2:156; D 1:50, 3:17; M 3:133; S 1:211; Nm 1:172; *abhikkamatha* (imper 2nd pl) (V 1:351; D 2:147, 3:16; M 1:205).

⁸²² *Mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha*, also occurs at §§5.20 & §6.5 x3 (the Buddha’s last words) = **Kusinārā S** (A 4.76/2:79 f); **Devatā S** (A 9.19/4:392). For comy, see MA 1:195 f, SA 3:111 f, 266 f.

Lamentations of the Mallas

5.21 Then when they had heard the venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas were grieved and saddened, afflicted at heart, and some of them lamented, with hair dishevelled; they lamented, with arms outstretched; they fell to the ground as if their feet had been cut off,⁸²³ rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon will the Blessed One enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Sugata [Wellfarer] enter parinirvana! Too soon will the Eye in the world disappear!”

Then the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas, grieving and saddened, afflicted at heart, went to the Upavattana sal grove and approached the venerable Ānanda.

5.22 Then this occurred to the venerable Ānanda,

“If I were to allow the Mallas of Kusinārā to salute the Blessed One one by one, the night will have passed before they have all paid homage. What if I were to let them pay homage *family by family*, saying, ‘Bhante, the Malla named so-and-so with his children, with his wife, with his servants, with his companions, pay homage with their heads at the Blessed One’s feet.’⁸²⁴

5.22.2 Then the venerable Ānanda, let the Mallas of Kusinārā pay homage to the Blessed One, family by family, saying,

“Bhante, the Malla named so-and-so with his children, with his wife, with his servants, with his companions, pay homage with their heads at the Blessed One’s feet.”

And so by this means, the venerable Ānanda had the Mallas of Kusinārā pay homage to the Blessed One during the first watch.

THE LAST CONVERT

Subhadda the last convert

5.23 Now at that time, a wanderer named **Subhadda**⁸²⁵ was dwelling at Kusinārā. The wanderer Subhadda heard, “It is said that the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight.” [149]

Then this occurred to the wanderer Subhadda,

“Now I have heard this being said amongst teacher after teacher, mature and aged,

‘Very rarely⁸²⁶ do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’

And the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight.

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now, since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.”

⁸²³ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādaṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna-papātam papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna-pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁸²⁴ The desire to have one’s name announced to a holy person appears to have been a part of pre-Buddhist devotional practice of seeing (*dassana*; Skt *darśana*) a holy person. Elsewhere, the stock passage reads: “Then ⟨so and so⟩ went up to the Blessed One. Some exchanged greetings with him; some greeted him with their palms together; some announced their name and clan before the Blessed One—and then sat down at one side. Some kept silent and sat down at one side” (D 1:151, 2:356, 3:208; M 1:229, 401; 3:291; S 5:353; A 1:181). It is customary that those well-disposed to the Buddha would announce their names when visiting him. This passage here and others in the Pali Canon indicate that it was quickly adopted by the Indian Buddhists. It continued in the Buddhist custom of having the donor’s name inscribed in bas-reliefs near or on a stupa, even in locations where the name would not be directly visible to human eyes.

⁸²⁵ **Subhadda** was from a high-caste wealthy brahmin family (*udicca.brāhmaṇa.mahā,sālā*) (DA 2:588; cf DhA 3:376 f). It is interesting that in the past, Subhadda and Aññāta Koṇḍañña—the first saint (a streamwinner) after the Buddha (S 56.11,16/1:423), and then arhat (S 22.59.24/3:68)—were brothers (DA 2:588). According to the Tibetan Dulva, Subhadra (*Rab-bzang*) is 120 years old, greatly respected by the people of Kusinārā. After attaining arhathood, Subhadra performs miracles and converts the Mallas, and then passes away before the Buddha (Rockhill 1884: 138). The Sanskrit **Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūtra** adds an interesting detail: the Buddha, before relinquishing his life-formation, lives on long enough so that the two persons, namely, Supriya, the king of the Gandharvas, and Subhadra the wanderer, who could benefit from being taught by the Buddha himself, would gain spiritual maturity within three months. See **Intro (9.5)**.

⁸²⁶ “Very rarely,” *kadāci karahaci*, lit “perhaps sometimes.”

5.24 Then the wanderer went to the Upavattana sal grove of the Mallas, approached the venerable Ānanda, and said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Now I have heard this being said amongst teacher after teacher, mature and aged,

‘Very rarely do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’
And the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight.

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.

Master Ānanda, may I have a darshan [seeing] of the recluse Gotama.”

5.24.2 When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Enough,⁸²⁷ avuso Subhadda, trouble not the Tathāgata. The Blessed One is tired.”

For the second time, the wanderer *requested*.

For the third time, the wanderer said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“Now I have heard this being said amongst teacher after teacher, mature and aged,

‘Very rarely do the Tathāgatas, the arhats [worthy ones], the fully self-awakened ones, arise in the world.’
And the parinirvana of the recluse Gotama will occur tonight. [150]

And there has arisen in me this doubt regarding the Dharma [truth]. Now since I have faith in the recluse Gotama, I am sure that the recluse Gotama will show me the Dharma so that I will overcome this doubt regarding the Dharma.

Master Ānanda, may I have a darshan with the recluse Gotama.”

For the third time, too, the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Enough, avuso Subhadda, trouble not the Tathāgata. The Blessed One is tired.”

The Buddha welcomes Subhadda⁸²⁸

5.25 Now the Blessed One heard the venerable Ānanda’s conversation with the wanderer Subhadda. Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Enough, Ānanda, do not hinder Subhadda. Ānanda, let Subhadda have a darshan [seeing] of the Tathāgata. Whatever Subhadda will ask me, all that is for the sake of knowledge: he wishes to ask not for the sake of vexing the Tathāgata. And whatever he will ask, I will answer so that he will quickly understand.”⁸²⁹

Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the wanderer Subhadda:

“Go, avuso Subhadda, the Blessed One gives you the opportunity.”

5.26 Then the wanderer Subhadda approached the Blessed One, and having exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Blessed One:

“Master Gotama, there are recluses and brahmins, heads of an order, heads of a group [congregation], congregation teachers, well known and famous, ford-makers [who bring others across the river of suffering], regarded as good by the masses,⁸³⁰ that is to say, Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesambalī, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhi,putta and Nigaṇṭha Nātha,putta.⁸³¹ Have they all, according to their own declaration, gained superknowledge⁸³² or have they not, [151] or have some gained superknowledge and some not?”

The presence of saints

5.26.2 “Enough, Subhadda, let this matter rest, that is to say, whether they all have, according to their own declaration, gained superknowledge or not, or whether some have gained superknowledge and some not!

⁸²⁷ “Enough,” *alam*, in contemporary parlance, “I’m sorry!”

⁸²⁸ Udāna Comy says that one of the 3 reasons that the Buddha has chosen to pass away in Kusināra is because of this occasion, ie, the conversion of the wanderer Subhadda (UA 402). For the other 2 reasons, see subtitle at §5.18 n.

⁸²⁹ *Alam Ānanda, mā Subhaddam vāresi, labhataṃ Ānanda Subhaddo Tathāgataṃ dassanāya. Yam kiñci maṃ Subhaddo pucchissati, sabban taṃ aññā,pekho ‘va pucchissati no vihesā,pekho, yañ c’assāham puṭṭho vyākarissāmi taṃ khippam eva ājānissatī ti.*

⁸³⁰ “The head of an order...etc...advanced in years,” *saṅghino gaṇino gaṇ ‘ācariyā ñāto yasassino titthakarā sādhu, sammatā ca bahu, janassa*. Similar stock passage at D 2,2/1:47.

⁸³¹ These are the **6 non-Buddhist teachers** (*titthiyā*) who are all recluses (*samaṇā*), ie members of the reform movement against the brahminical tradition. Summary of teachings: Pūraṇa Kassapa: antinomian ethics; Makkhali Gosāla: fatalism or determinism; Ajita Kesambalī: materialism; Pakudha Kaccāyana: atomism; Sañjaya Belaṭṭhi,putta: agnosticism; and Nigaṇṭha Nātha,putta: the fourfold restraints. For details, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,16-33/1:52-59) & Jaini (1970) 2001:57-61.

⁸³² “Realized direct (higher) knowledge,” *abbhaññaṃsu*, aor 2nd pl from *abhijānāti*.

I will teach you the Dharma, Subhadda. Listen to it, Subhadda, pay close attention. I will speak.”

“Yes, bhante,” the wanderer Subhadda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said this:

5.27 ⁸³³“Subhadda, in whatever Dharma [teaching] and Vinaya [discipline], where **the noble eightfold path** is not found,

the recluse of the first kind [streamwinner] is not found there,
the recluse of the second kind [once-returned] is not found there,
the recluse of the third kind [non-returned] is not found there,
the recluse of the fourth kind [arhat] is not found there.

5.27.2 ⁸³⁴But, Subhadda, in whatever Dharma and Vinaya, where the noble eightfold path is found,

the recluse of the first kind [streamwinner] is found there,
the recluse of the second kind [once-returned] is found there,
the recluse of the third kind [non-returned] is found there,
the recluse of the fourth kind [arhat] is found there.

5.27.3 Empty of recluses are the other outside doctrines,⁸³⁵ but, Subhadda, **if these monks were to live rightly here [in this teaching], this world will not be empty of arhats.**⁸³⁶

*Ekūna, timso vayasā subhadda
yam pabbajim kim, kusalanuesī
vassāni paññāsa, samādhikāni
yato aham pabbajito subhadda
ñāyassa dhammassa padesa, vattī
ito bahiddhā samaṇo pi n'atthi*

I was 29 years of age, Subhadda,
when I went forth, seeking for the good.
Now over 50 years have passed⁸³⁷
since the day that I went forth, Subhadda.
Beyond the realm of the right way, that is the Dharma,⁸³⁸
there is no recluse. **[152]**

5.28 ⁸³⁹When this was said, the wanderer Subhadda said this to the Blessed One:

“Excellent, bhante! Excellent! Bhante! Just as if, bhante, one were to place upright what had been overturned, or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed One.

I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks.

May I, bhante, receive the going-forth before the Blessed One; may I receive admission into the order.”

Subhadda joins the order

5.28.2 ⁸⁴⁰Subhadda, anyone who was previously a follower of an outside teaching and wishes to go forth in this Dharma and Vinaya, and wishes for the ordination, has to go on a probation of four months.⁸⁴¹ At the end of

⁸³³ This §5.27 is qu at Kvu 601. See also Gethin 2001:260 f.

⁸³⁴ The next two paras at M 1:63 f & A 2:138.

⁸³⁵ *Suññā para-p, pavādā samaṇehi aññe*. Comy says that “other sects” are the proponents of the 62 views, who lack the 12 kinds of ascetics, viz, the 4 who have attained the fruits (*phal'atthaka, samaṇa*), the 4 who have attained the path (*mag-g'atthaka, samaṇa*), and the 4 working on insight (*āradhā, vipassaka samaṇa*) to attain the respective paths (AA 3:214). This sentence forms part of a longer lion-roar (*sīha, nāda*) at **Cūḷa Sīha, nāda S** (M 11,2,2), SD 49.2 & **(Catukka) Samaṇa S** (A 4.239/2:238,9), SD 49.14

⁸³⁶ This declaration should not be interpreted as a triumphalist and exclusivist statement, but merely reflecting the religious conditions of the Buddha's time. It should be balanced with the Buddha's declaration in **Puppha S** (S 3:138): “I do not quarrel with the world, monks, but the world quarrels with me. One who speaks Dharma does not quarrel with anyone in the world. Of that to which the wise men of the world do not assent, I too say that it is not so. Of that to which the wise men of the world assent, I too say that it is so” (S 22.94/3:138). “Here the Buddha emphasizes that he does not reject all ontological propositions, but only those that transcend the bounds of possible experience” (S:B 1085 n185). See also Gethin 2001:261.

⁸³⁷ On these dates, see SD 47.12 (1.2) n on Rāhula.

⁸³⁸ “The right way that is the wholesome truth” (*ñāya kusala dhamma*): see n in **(Brahma, vihāra) Subha S** (M 99,4/-2:197), SD 38.6.

§5.28 (on the probate who is from another religion) is found at V 1:69, 71, D 1:176, M 1:391, 494, S 2:21.

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the four months, the monks who are satisfied⁸⁴² will give him the going-forth [novice initiation] and ordain him into monkhood [higher ordination].

However, I see a difference amongst individuals here.”⁸⁴³

5.29 “If, bhante, anyone who was previously a follower of an outside teaching and wishes to go forth in this Dharma and Vinaya, and wishes for the ordination, has to go on *a probation of four months*,... I will take that probation for four years! At the end of the four years, let the monks who are satisfied give me the going-forth [novice initiation] and ordain me into monkhood [higher ordination].”⁸⁴⁴

Then, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Then, Ānanda, let Subhadda go forth!”⁸⁴⁵

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the Blessed One.

5.30 Then the wanderer Subhadda said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“It is a gain for you, Ānanda, a great gain, that you have been anointed here before the Teacher [by his own mouth] with the pupil’s anointing [the discipleship consecration].”⁸⁴⁶ **[153]**

5.31 THE FULL ARHATHOOD PERICOPE⁸⁴⁷

Then the wanderer Subhadda received the going forth and the ordination before Blessed One himself.⁸⁴⁸

⁸⁴⁹And not long after his ordination,

dwelling alone, aloof (from the world), diligent, exertive, and resolute,⁸⁵⁰

in no long time at all, right here and now, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge,⁸⁵¹

attained and dwelled in the supreme goal of the holy life,⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁰ This section [§§5.28b-29], as at **Kassapa Sīhanāda S** (D 8.24/1:176), **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,5.28b-29), SD 9, **Acela Kassapa S** (S 12.17/2:18-22), SD 18.5, & **Sabhiya S** (Sn 3.6/p102).

⁸⁴¹ This rule and procedure are found at Mv 1.38 = V 1:69; see also D 1:176; M 1:494, 512; S 2:21; Sn p101 f.

⁸⁴² “Satisfied,” *āraddha, citta*, ie satisfied that the probate has fulfilled all conditions as stipulated at Mahāvagga 1.38 = V 1:69 (VA 5:990; DA 2:363; MA 3:106; SA 2:37; SnA 2:436).

⁸⁴³ *Api ca m’ettha puggala, vemattatā viditā ti. Saṅkhitta S 2* (S 48.13) explains that “the difference in individuals” (*puggala, vemattatā*) is due to one’s level in cultivating the 5 spiritual faculties (*indriya*)—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom—“Thus, monks, due to a difference in the faculties there is a difference in the fruits; due to a difference in the fruits, there is a difference among individuals” (S 48.13/5:200). In other words, the Buddha takes exception of him, as he did in the case of the fire-worshipping matter hair ascetics (the **3 Kassapa brothers**) (V 1:34 f; J 1:82, 4:180) and **Acela Kassapa** (D 8.24/2:176 f); see SnA 2:436. The wanderer **Sabhiya**, however, had to observe the 4-month probation (Sn 3.6/p102). The Buddha knows whether a non-Buddhist convert needs probation or not (DA 2:362), and Subhadda does not, apparently because his 5 spiritual faculties are well developed. Comy says that after the Buddha has granted Subhadda permission to join the order, Ānanda takes him aside, pours water over his head, teaches him the “meditation with skin as fifth” (*taca, pañcaka kammaṭṭhāna*), then shaves off his hair and beard, clads him in the saffron robes, and then administers to him the three refuges. Then he leads him back to the Buddha who gives him a meditation subject. Subhadda immediately goes into solitary practice, walking in meditation and wins arhathood that same night, and comes down to sit beside the Buddha (DA 2:590). Subhadda’s ordination is said to be the Buddha’s last act before his parinirvana (KhA 89). For the case of **Seniya**, the dog ascetic, see **Kukkura, vatika S** (M 57.14-15/3:391), SD 23.11.

⁸⁴⁴ Subhadda’s reply here is the same as that of Acela Kassapa, as in the Buddha’s following reply (D 8.24/ 2:176 f). However, Subhadda’s case is unique in that he wins arhathood on the same night.

⁸⁴⁵ This statement of the Buddha’s clearly shows that Subhadda is not personally ordained by the Buddha himself. Moreover the Buddha is not physically capable of doing so since he has lain down without the thought of rising again [§5.1].

⁸⁴⁶ *Lābhā vo āvuso ānanda, suladdham vo āvuso ānanda, ye [Ce yo] ettha satthu [Ce satthari] sammukhā antevāsābhisekena abhisittā ti*. Comy says that Subhadda makes this statement from his erstwhile non-Buddhist practice (DA 2:590).

⁸⁴⁷ For further details & refs on this pericope, see **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.3) nn, SD 7.14.

⁸⁴⁸ *Alattha kho subhaddo paribbājako bhāgavā santike pabbajjāṃ, alattham upasampadam.*

⁸⁴⁹ *Acirūpasampannam kho pan’āyasmā subhaddo eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpī pahit’attato viharanto, na cirass’eva yass’atthāya kula, puttā sammad-eva agārasmā anagāriyam pabbajanti, tad anuttaram brahma, cariya, pariyosānam, ditṭheva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsi*. This first part, along with the rest of this section form the “full arhathood pericope.” See foll n.

⁸⁵⁰ *Eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpī pahit’atto viharanto*. This is stock: V 2:258; M 1:177; A 2:258, 3:218; U 24. The first word, “**alone**” (*eka*) refers to bodily aloneness and physical solitude; “**aloof**” (*vūpakaṭṭha*) is mental solitude; both body and mind are aloof from the objects of sense-pleasures; often this word alone refers to a practitioner’s effort to rid the mind of sense-desire (M 36/1:246f = 85/2:93); “**diligent**” (*appamatta*), keeping to his meditative mindfulness; “**exertive**” (*ātāpī*) is putting forth both physical and effort; “**resolute**” (*pahit’atta*), “mentally resolute” by absence of longing regarding the body or life itself (DA 2:363; MA 1:180). Also as *ekā vūpakaṭṭhā appamattā ātāpino pahit’attā vihareyya* (V 2:258; A 3:218 (Ke Se ekeka...), 4:280). Sometimes the initial *eka* is omitted in the pericope.

⁸⁵¹ *Na cirass’eva...ditṭh’eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja*.

⁸⁵² *Tad anuttaram brahma, cariya, pariyosānam...vihāsi*.

for the sake of which sons of family⁸⁵³ rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness.⁸⁵⁴
⁸⁵⁵He directly knew:
 “Birth is destroyed,
 the holy life has been lived,
 done what is to be done,
 there is no more for this state of being.”
 And the venerable Subhadda became one of the arhats.
5.32 He was the last direct disciple of the Blessed One.⁸⁵⁶

Chapter 6 (Sixth Recital, *chaṭṭhī bhāṇavāra*)

THE BUDDHA’S FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Dharma-Vinaya as teacher

[154] **6.1** Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, it may be that you may think:
 ‘Gone is the Teacher’s word! We have no teacher.’

It should not be seen thus, Ānanda, for **the Dharma and the Vinaya [the teaching and the discipline] that I have taught and explained to you, will, at my passing, be your teacher.**⁸⁵⁷

6.2 Ānanda, now the monks address one another as ‘Āvuso’ [friend],⁸⁵⁸ but after my passing, they should not address one another so. Ānanda, the more junior monks should be addressed by the more senior monks by

⁸⁵³ *Kula,puttā* are of 2 kinds: those who are born so (*jāti kula,putta*), and those who are so by conduct (*ācāra kula,putta*). Either the second (which is all inclusive) is meant (DA 2:363), or both is meant (MA 1:180).

⁸⁵⁴ *Yass’atthāya kula,puttā sammad-eva agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti*,

⁸⁵⁵ This whole sentence: *Khīṇā jāti vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparam itthattāyāti abbhāññāsi*. This can be called “**the abbhāññāsi pericope**,” or **the essential arhathood stock passage**, which in fact, refers to the arhat’s reviewe knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa,ñāṇa*). *Abbhāññāsi* is the aorist (past tense) of *abhijānāti*, “he directly knows,” and the noun of which is *abhiññā*. “direct knowledge.” On the *abhāññāsi* pericope and the *paṭicaya* pericope (shorter arhathood stock passage), see SD 47.1 (3.2.2.3).

⁸⁵⁶ This line added by the Council fathers (*saṅgīti,kārā*) (DA 2:590). “Direct disciple,” *sakkhi,sāvaka*, lit “the disciple who witnesses (the Buddha).” Subhadda’s ordination is most interesting as there is no mention of the “act with the motion as the fourth” (*ñatti,cattuttha kamma,vācā*, Mahāvagga 1.38 = V 1:69). Without such a ceremony—ie the Buddha ordaining Subhadda himself—leads Rhys Davids to surmise that “it is otherwise probable that no such ceremony was usual in the earliest days of Buddhism” (D:RD 2:170). This may mean that the Vinaya ceremonies as we have them are possibly post-Buddha institutions.

⁸⁵⁷ **Gārava S** (S 6.2 @ SD 12.2) relates how the newly-awakened Buddha declares that **the Dharma is his teacher, worthy of his reverence**. The above may be said to give the essence of the MPS. The term *sattā* (teacher) is here redefined: while the Buddha lives, *he* is teacher; after his passing, the role is found in the Dharma and Vinaya. With the Buddha’s passing, Buddhism ceases to be a cult (where the teacher or leader is the final authority) and becomes a spiritual system or teaching-centred religion. In this sense, it may be said that the MPS is the Buddha’s last will and testament to his spiritual heirs. On the other hand, while the religious and faith-inclined here accept that the Buddha’s authority and presence have been *spiritually* transferred to the Dharma and Vinaya, they may also perceive that he is “*physically*” transferred into his relics, the stupa and the Buddha image. See Ray 1994: 348-352, 364. On **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108), see foll §6.2 n.

⁸⁵⁸ **Āvuso**, meaning “Friend!” “Sir!,” a polite vocative for monks equal in “rains” with the speaker, or to juniors; prob derived from **āvusso* < **āyuṣmas* (cf Whitney, *A Sanskrit Grammar*, London, 3rd ed 1896 §454); cf BHS *āvusa. āyuṣman*. Uses: (1) **by and to non-Buddhists** (V 1:8, Upaka; D 2:130, Āḷāra Kālāma; M 1:372, nirgrantha; Tha 1196; J 2:448, 3:230); (2) **by monks and nuns** (a) to laity (V 1:84; M 1:299, to Visākha; J 3:191, 4:244; (b) to each other (but not to the Buddha), later only by a senior monk to a junior (*āvuso,vādā*) (V 1:9; D 2:154; UA 311): see RO Franke, “The Buddhist Councils at Rājagaha and Vesālī,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 1908:18-44. See CPD & DP sv.

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name, or by clan [gotra] or as ‘Āvuso.’ The more senior monks should be addressed by the more junior monks as ‘Bhante’ [Bhante] or as ‘Āyasmā’ [Venerable].⁸⁵⁹

The lesser and minor rules

6.3 Ānanda, after my passing, the order may, if it wishes, abrogate the lesser and minor rules.⁸⁶⁰

The supreme penalty imposed on Channa

6.4 Ānanda, after my passing, the supreme penalty should be imposed on Channa.⁸⁶¹

And what, bhikshus, is the supreme penalty (*brahma,daṇḍa*)?⁸⁶²

Bhikshus, let the monk Channa say whatever he wishes to say: that monk should not be spoken to nor admonished nor instructed.”

THE FINAL MOMENTS

The Buddha’s last words

6.5⁸⁶³ Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Now, bhikshus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikshus. Regret not later,⁸⁶⁴ [155] saying:

‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

When this was spoken, the monks remained silent.

And for the second time, the Blessed One *addressed the monks*....

“Now, bhikshus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikshus. Regret not later, saying:

‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

⁸⁵⁹ The reason here is clearly to prevent fraternizing and disrespect, and to inculcate due respect to seniority, so that proper authority is acknowledged and harmony maintained, hence promoting solidarity in the order. In this way, the Dharma protects the order. In **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108), the Magadha chief minister, Vassakāra, questions Ānanda on the authority and succession of power in the order, and Ānanda answers that no one person holds such an authority or power, but that the order has “the Dharma as our refuge” (D 108.9/3:9), that they are guided by the Pātimokkha (D 108.10/3:10), and that an individual monk is respected not for his position but for his spiritual qualities (D 108.11-23/3:10-12), SD 33.5.

⁸⁶⁰ **The lesser and minor rules** (*khuddakānukhuddakā sikkhāpadā*). See Intro (12) above.

⁸⁶¹ A monk named Channa (Skt Chandaka) is depicted at several places in the Vinaya as despising all other monks on the grounds that “the Buddha is mine; the Dharma is mine! It was by my young master that the Dharma was realized” (Saṅgh’ādi,sesa 12 = V 3:177 f.). This would fit in with the post-canonical tradition identifying Channa as the horseman who accompanied the young Prince Siddhartha on the night of the latter’s great renunciation. Two rules in the Vinaya—Saṅghādisesa 12 & Pācittiya 12—depict him as devious & impossible to admonish. He counter-questioned his examiners during another Saṅgh’ādi,sesa proceeding against him (Saṅghādisesa 12 = V 4:35 ff.). Going in search of grass and sticks for his lodging, he damaged the cornfield of a certain brahmin (Pācittiya 19 = V 4:47). He once cut down a tree shrine revered by the people to make space for a residence (Saṅgh’ādi,sesa 7 = V 3:155 f.). He was generally disrespectful to others (Pācittiya 54 = V 4:113).

As defined by the Buddha, **the supreme penalty** (*brahma,daṇḍa*) is effectively a total boycott by the order. The closing of Culla,vagga 11 of the Vinaya records how when Ānanda conveys the supreme penalty to Channa at Ghosit’ārāma (in Kosambī), he faints at the thought of being boycotted by the order. He then goes into retreat to develop himself (V 2:292). **Channa S** (S 22.90) records in a humorous tone, how he attempts to seek Dharma instruction from other monks, and how Ānanda admonishes him (S 3:133 ff.). Apparently, no monk actually boycotts him, since they try to answer his questions, albeit careful to not offend him. As Ānanda then explains in that passage, the supreme penalty is automatically lifted at the moment of Channa’s final attainment.

Channa S (S 22.90) has a different version of how Channa corrects himself—Ānanda gives the teachings of the **Kaccāna,gotta S** (S 12.15/2:17) on how dependent arising counters the two extreme views of eternalism and annihilationism, and how self-view is replaced by the realization that it is only *dukkha* that arises and ceases—and he breaks through to the Dharma (S 3:132-134). Cf D 1:96 where *brahma,daṇḍa* is used differently.

⁸⁶² The *brahma,daṇḍa* is a total boycott of a monk who is scurrilous (*mukhara*) and uncivil to other monks (VA 7:1402 on the Parivāra). Comy says that, after being boycotted by the Sangha, Channa experiences samvega (spiritual urgency) so that he finally directs all his efforts towards spiritual training and attains breakthrough (SA 2:317 f), as reported in (**Dvi,lakkhaṇa**) **Channa S** (S 22.90/3:132-135), SD 56.5.

⁸⁶³ This § [5] is found in **Kusinārā S** (A 4.76/2:79 f).

⁸⁶⁴ *Mā pacchā vippaṭṭisārino ahuvattha*): as at §§5.19+20. Elsewhere, it forms the well known call to meditate: see **Araka S** (A 22.70.4/3:139), SD 16.17 & n. For comy, see MA 1:195 f, SA 3:111 f, 266 f. From here to §6.6 = **Kusinārā S** (A 4.-76/2:79 f); **Devatā S** (A 9.19/4:392).

But for the second time, the monks remained silent.

And for the third time, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Now, bhikshus, there may be doubts or misgivings amongst some monks as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way. Ask, bhikshus. Regret not later, saying:

‘We were before the Blessed One, and we were not able to ask the Blessed One face to face!’”

But for the third time, the monks remained silent.

6.5.2 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks:

‘If, bhikshus, you do not ask out of respect for the Teacher, then, bhikshus, let a friend tell it another friend.’

When this was spoken, the monks remained silent.

6.6 Then the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

“It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvellous, bhante! I have faith [confidence], bhante, in this order of monks, that there is neither doubt nor misgiving in a single monk as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way.”

“Ānanda, you speak out of *faith* (*pasādā*). But Ānanda the Tathāgata *knows* here that there is in this order of monks, neither doubt nor misgiving in a single monk as regards the Buddha or the Dharma or the Sangha or the path or the way.

For, Ānanda, amongst these 500 monks,⁸⁶⁵ even the most backward [the least developed] monk is a stream-winner, not bound for the lower world,⁸⁶⁶ destined for awakening.”⁸⁶⁷

6.7⁸⁶⁸ Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: [156]

“Now, bhikshus, I exhort you: **Conditioned things are subject to decay—strive on diligently [with diligence]**!”⁸⁶⁹

These were the Tathāgata’s last words.

The Buddha’s 9 progressive abodes⁸⁷⁰

6.8⁸⁷¹ Then the Blessed One attained

the first dhyana.

⁸⁶⁵ According to the Vinaya—see §6.20n on the old Subhadda below—the Buddha was journeying with 1250 monks (V 1:249 f) when he was visited by the old Subhadda at Atumā [§4.30]. There appears a discrepancy in the number of monks here. However, it is possible that the 1250 refers to a total number of monks accompanying the Buddha, but the 500 refers only to the saints sitting close to the Buddha. It is unlikely that the entourage had started with 1250 but dwindled to 500 at this crucial point.

⁸⁶⁶ *Avinīpāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinīpāta*, “the world of suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (*pañca,gati*) (D 3:234=33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal kingdom (*tirachāna,yoni*), the ghost realm (*pitti,visa-ya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura,kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 1999:14-19.

⁸⁶⁷ On attaining streamwinning, one’s doubts regarding the Dharma are uprooted (Sn 231). Since those present are at least of this level, none of them asks any question. Skt Mahā,parinirvāṇa Sūtra §42.8 tells us that the Buddha acts out of compassion for future generations (for us today): *api tu karaṇīyaṃ etat tathāgatena yathāpi tat paścimaṃ janatāṃ anukampamā- nah* (Waldschmidt 1951:392). This act testifies to the fact that at the disciples at the time of the Buddha’s death are free from doubts regarding the teachings. As the Buddha has passed away at remote Pāvā, no nuns are present because they did not follow the monks in their wanderings. Nuns are not permitted to travel with monks (V 4:62,28). See Analayo 2014:5. See **Silence and the Buddha**, SD 44.1 (5.1.2.2).

⁸⁶⁸ The foll §§ [6.7-10] are at **Parinibbāna S** (S 1:157-159) but differs as to order of sentences.

⁸⁶⁹ *Vaya,dhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādetthā ti*. In **Parinibbāna S** (S 6.2), this is reversed: *appamādena sampā-detha, vaya,dhammā saṅkhārā ti* (S 6.2/1:158). However, Bodhi appears not to have noticed this, rendering it asvin Mahā,parinibbāna S (S:B 251). The Sarvāstivāda ed omits *appamādena sampādettha*. The Chin versions vary, T1 eg gives a more elaborate exhortation here.

⁸⁷⁰ On why the Buddha passes away upopn emerging from the 4th dhyana, see (9.10). The 9 proressive abodes (*nava anu-pubba.vihāra*) are the 4 for dhyanas, the 4 formless attainments, and cessation: see SD 8.4 (1.2) & SD 48.2 (3.6.3).

⁸⁷¹ As at **Parinibbāna S** (S 6.15/1:157 f) but it omits Ānanda’s remark that the Buddha (while in cessation) had passed away, and Anuruddha’s reply. It also omits mention of the earth-tremor and thunder. In **Parinibbāna S**, Ānanda’s stanza precedes Anuruddha’s (which is last, showing its importance) but in Mahā **Parinibbāna S** Anuruddha’s stanza comes first, and Ānanda’s stanza is last.

Emerging from *the first dhyana*, he attained the second dhyana.
 Emerging from *the second dhyana*, he attained the third dhyana.
 Emerging from *the third dhyana*, he attained the fourth dhyana.
 Emerging from *the fourth dhyana*, he attained the base of infinite space.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of infinite space*, he attained the base of infinite consciousness.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of infinite consciousness*, he attained the base of nothingness.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of nothingness*, he attained the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception*, he attained the cessation of perception and feeling.⁸⁷²

6.8.2 Then the venerable Ānanda addressed the venerable Anuruddha thus:⁸⁷³

“Bhante Anuruddha, the Blessed One has attained parinirvana!”

“Avuso Ānanda, the Blessed One has not attained parinirvana: he has attained the cessation of perception and feeling.”

6.9⁸⁷⁴ Then the Blessed One, emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling, attained the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception*, he attained the base of the attainment of nothingness.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of nothingness*, he attained the base of infinite consciousness.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of infinite consciousness*, he attained the base of infinite space.
 Emerging from *the attainment of the base of infinite space*, he attained the fourth dhyana.
 Emerging from *the fourth dhyana*, he attained the third dhyana.
 Emerging from *the third dhyana*, he attained the second dhyana.
 Emerging from *the second dhyana*, he attained the first dhyana.
 Emerging from *the first dhyana*, he attained the second dhyana.
 Emerging from *the second dhyana*, he attained the third dhyana.
 Emerging from *the third dhyana*, he attained the fourth dhyana.
 Emerging from *the fourth dhyana*, the Blessed One immediately⁸⁷⁵ attained parinirvana.⁸⁷⁶

The parinirvana process that follows here is evidently noted by Anuruddha, the foremost of the monks, through his “divine eye” (*dibba,cakkhu*), ie clairvoyance (A 1:23). See foll § [6.9]. Interestingly, Apadāna describes Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī’s parinirvana in similar terms (except for the cessation of perception and feeling):

Having sent them all away, she attained the supreme state,
 To the first dhyana, and the second and the third and the fourth. (145)
 Then she attained the realm of (boundless) space, and of boundless consciousness, too;
 To the realm of nothingness, and to neither perception (nor non-perception) in stages. (146)
 Then Gotamī attained the dhyanas in reverse; then from the first as far as the fourth dhyana.* (147)
 Having risen from there, free from the influxes, she went out like a lamp.
 The great earth shook, lightning fell from the sky. (148)

Tato sātā visajjitvā, paṭhamam jhānam uttamam; | Dutiyāñ ca tatiyañ ca, samāpajji catutthakam. || 145

Ākāśāyatanañ c’eva, viññānañc’āyatanañ tathā; | Ākiñcañ n’eva saññañ ca, samāpajji yathākkamam. || 146

Paṭilomena jhānāni, samāpajjittha gotamī; | Yāvatā paṭhamam jhānam, tato yāva catutthakam. || 147*

Tato vuṭṭhāya nibbāyi, dīpac,c’iva nirāsavā. | Bhūmi,cālo mahā āsi, nabhasā vijjutā pati. || 148 (Ap 145-48)

[*Cf J S Walters, “Gotamī’s Story,” 1995:133 f, where he apparently errs in his tr of Ap 147d.]

Saṅgīti S (D 33.3.2(6)) says that by attaining the 1st dhyana, sensuous perception (*kāma,sañña*) stops; by attaining the 2nd dhyana, initial application and sustained application stops; by attaining the 3rd dhyana, zest stops; by attaining the 4th dhyana, in-and-out breathing stops (D 33,3.2(6)/3:266, 290). On dhyana, see SD 8.4. On nirodha, see SD 1.1 (6). See S:B 441 n441.

⁸⁷² “The cessation of perception and feeling,” *saññā,vediyita nirodha*: see (9.10.5).

⁸⁷³ Ānanda, assuming that the Buddha has passed away, addresses Anuruddha, his senior, as “bhante,” in line with the Buddha’s instructions [§6.2].

⁸⁷⁴ This § [9] as at **Vihāra S 2** (A 9.33/4:410 ff).

The 4 verses

6.10⁸⁷⁷ (1) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, **Brahmā Sahampati**⁸⁷⁸ uttered this stanza on that occasion:⁸⁷⁹

All beings in the world shall forsake this bodily formation!
Even the Teacher, peerless in the human world, is such a one.
The One Thus-come, empowered,⁸⁸⁰ the self-awakened has passed away.

6.10.2⁸⁸¹ And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana,⁸⁸² it was accompanied⁸⁸³ by a great earth-tremor, terrifying and hair-raising, and thunder-peals [the sky-drums bursting forth].⁸⁸⁴ [157]

(2) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, **Sakra, the kings of the devas**, uttered this stanza at that very moment:⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁷⁵ *Samanantarā*. Saṃyutta Comy: Here there are 2 kinds of *samanantarā*: immediately after dhyana and immediately after reviewing. In the former case, one emerges from the 4th dhyana, descends into the life-continuum (*bhavaṅga*) and attains parinirvana. In the latter case, one emerges from the 4th dhyana, reviews the dhyana-factors again, then descends into the life-continuum and attains parinirvana, as in the case of the Buddha. But buddhas, pratyeka buddhas, noble disciples, and even ants and termites pass away by way of the noble truth that is suffering, with a karmically indeterminate *bhavaṅga* consciousness (SA 1:224).

⁸⁷⁶ These stages that the Buddha passes through in his very last moments—the 4 dhyanas (*jhāna*), the 4 formless attainments (*samāpatti*), and the cessation of perception and feeling (*saññā, vedayita, nirodha*)—are known as “the 9 successive abodes” (*anupubba, vihāra*) (D 3:265, 290; cf 2:156, 4; A 4:410, 414; S 2:216, 222; U 78; Pm 1.5, 2.30; Miln 176. Cf Waldschmidt 1951:394; DĀ 2 = T1.1.26b21-26c8, T1.6.188b19-c7; T1.7.205a3-b1). The Elottar’āgama says that **Mahā Prajāpati Gautamī**, too, goes through the same meditation sequence, and upon emerging from the 4th dhyana, passes away, accompanied by a great earth-tremor (EĀ 52.1 = T2.125.821b25-822a23). These stages are also called “the 9 successive cessations” (*anupubba, nirodha*) (D 33.3.2(6)/3:266, 290; A 9.31/ 4:409, 456; Pm 1.35). (**Anupubba**) **Vihāra S 2** calls them “the successive attainments” (*anupubba, samāpatti*) (A 9.33/4:410-414). On why the Buddha passes away upon emerging from the 4th dhyana, see (9.10). On “the progressive cessation of formations” (*anupubba, saṅkhārānam nirodho*), see **Rahogata S** (S 36.11/4:217).

The German Tibetophile, self-styled Lama Govinda, for some strange reason, thinks that this event “confirms our assumption that the death-consciousness coincides with the fifth jhāna from where two ways are open to the meditator: that of remembrance of former lives or that which leads to the four arūpaloka-jhānas” (*The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy*, 1961:131). Are we to understand that at the moment of dying all beings, or at least human beings, would attain the four (Abhidharma “fifth”) dhyana? On Govinda, see Lopez, Jr, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 1998:7, 59-63.

⁸⁷⁷ **Parinibbāna S** of the Brahma Saṃyutta (S 1:158) contains the first verse since it is attributed to Brahmā. The second is Sakra’s. The last two verses are there put into the mouths of Ānanda and of Anuruddha respectively, perhaps because Anuruddha’s verse forms a more fitting conclusion (S 1:158). In the Dīgha, however, Ānanda’s verse comes last, “either in deprecation of Ānanda (which is scarcely probable), or more probably the way in which the early Buddhists regarded the passing of the Buddha. These four speakers are ‘four representative persons’: **Brahmā**, the exalted god of the brahmins; **Sakra** (Śakra), the king of the gods, popular with the Buddhists; **Anuruddha**, the holy, thoughtful arhat; and **Ānanda**, the loving, childlike disciple” (D:RD 2:71, 73). The Chinese *Mahā Parinirvāna Sūtra of the Dīgh’āgama Sūtra* (Nanjio no 545) records 18 speakers uttering stanzas on this occasion (see *Sino-Indian Studies* 1,4 1945).

⁸⁷⁸ **Brahmā Sahampati** (who had just after the Great Awakening invited the Buddha to proclaim the Dharma) (V 1:5-7 = M 1:169 = S 1:138 f). See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004:4.2.

⁸⁷⁹ “At that very moment,” free tr of *saha parinibbānā*. See n on the 1st line here.

⁸⁸⁰ *Bala-p, patta*, here refers to the Buddha’s 10 powers: see **Mahā Sīhanāda S** (M 12.9-20/1:69-71).

⁸⁸¹ This § [6.10] as at Tha 905, 1046, A 1:236; cf Tha 905

⁸⁸² Traditionally, it is said that the Buddha passed away in the early hours of the full-moon day of the month of Vaiśākha, 543 BC (or, according to modern scholars, c. 483 BCE) at the age of 80. To remember the Buddha and mark this important occasion, south and south-east Asian Buddhists calculate their respective **Buddhist calendars** from this year (that is, by adding the number 543 to the Common Era). On whether the Buddha actually died on Vesak day, see **Intro (9.4)**.

⁸⁸³ The phrase in the sentence thus far: *Parinibbute Bhagavati saha parinibbānā*.

⁸⁸⁴ A similar phenomenon (*dhamma, niyāma*) follows immediately after the Buddha relinquishes the rest of his lifespan [§3.10].

⁸⁸⁵ **Sakra**, the king of the gods, utters this popular ancient verse, said to be a remnant from the teaching of the previous Buddha, Kasapa, that only he remembers: **D 16,6.10/2:157 = D 17,2.17/2:199 = S v21/1.11/1:6, 609, S v609/6.15/1:158, S** <http://dharmafarer.org>

Impermanent, alas, are formations!
having arisen, they cease to be—

It is their nature to rise and fall:
happy it is when they are stilled!

(3) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, **the venerable Anuruddha** uttered this stanza at that very moment:⁸⁸⁶

There is no more in-breath and out-breath for such a one of steady mind;⁸⁸⁷
The wise sage [silent sage], unstirred, bent on peace, passed away.
With mind unshaken, he endured the feeling [the pain]:
Like a lamp extinguished, his mind is freed.

(4) And when the Blessed One had passed into parinirvana, **the venerable Ānanda** uttered this stanza at that very moment:⁸⁸⁸

Then there was terror, then there was hair-raising fear,
When the self-awakened one, perfect in all excellent qualities, attained parinirvana.

The monks lament

6.10.3 When the Blessed One passed into parinirvana, some of those monks who were still not free from lust lamented, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁸⁸⁹ rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One **[158]** entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

But those monks that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,
‘Impermanent are formations [conditioned things]! How else could it be?’⁸⁹⁰

6.11 Then the venerable Anuruddha addressed the monks:

“Enough, avuso, do not grieve! Do not weep! Has not the Blessed One told you before: ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.’⁸⁹¹

Avuso, the devas are grumbling [protesting against your lamentation]!”

v776/9.6/1:200 = S 15.20/2:193 (Buddha) = J 95/1:392 = Tha 1159 = DhA 1.6/1:71; DA 3:748; MA 1:235. This famous stanza concludes **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.2.17.4/2:199), SD 36.12.

⁸⁸⁶ As at Tha 905 f, but with an additional stanza: “These now are the sage’s last sense-impressions, with touch as the fifth; * no other mental phenomena will there be, the awakened one is cooled” (**Tha 907**). [*The other 4: feeling, perception, volition, consciousness.] In **Parinibbana S** (S 1:158), Anuruddha’s stanza here appears last, after Ānanda’s, showing its importance.

⁸⁸⁷ “Such a one of steady mind” (*thita, cittassa tādino*; Skt *sthira, cittasya tāyinaḥ*, Avadś 2.199). Here, the meaning is something deeper than the mere fact that the Buddha’s respiration has stopped (or that he is “clinically dead”), but that he is no more defined by the kind of breathing that keep us alive; he is immeasurable: he is in nirvana. On *tādino* (gen sg), see **Sabba Kamma Jaha S** (U 3.1.12/21) + SD 39.3 (1.4.2).

⁸⁸⁸ See prec n.

⁸⁸⁹ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādāṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna, papātāṃ papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna, pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁸⁹⁰ *Tam kut’ ettha labbhā?* Lit, “What can you get here?” As at §§5.6, 6.11.

⁸⁹¹ This nested quote is stock: D 16,3.48/2:118=16.5.14/144=16.6.11a/158=16.6.20/163.



Fig 6.9 The Great Parinirvana:
(l) Modern Myanmar drawing;
(r) Japanese painting, 1392.



The devas lament⁸⁹²

6.11.2 ⁸⁹³“But, bhante, what kinds of devatas is the venerable Anuruddha considering?”

“There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in the sky [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the air];⁸⁹⁴ lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁸⁹⁵ rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!’

6.11.3 There are, Ānanda, devatas who perceive earth in earth [who assume a gross form so that they can stand in the ground];⁸⁹⁶ lamenting, with hair dishevelled; lamenting, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁸⁹⁷ rolling to and fro, crying:

‘Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!’

But those devatas that are free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,

‘Impermanent are conditioned things! How else could it be?’

⁸⁹² This whole section repeats in §5.6, in the Buddha’s mouth.

⁸⁹³ The following sections [§§6.11-15]—Anuruddha consoles Ānanda, instructs him to announce the Buddha’s passing to the Mallas, and the laying in state—are unique to this Sutta.

⁸⁹⁴ See n in §5.6b above.

⁸⁹⁵ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādaṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna,papātam papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna,pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁸⁹⁶ See n in §5.6b above.

⁸⁹⁷ “As if their feet have been cut off,” see n at 6.11a.

THE LAST RITES

Anuruddha and Ānanda

6.12⁸⁹⁸ Then the venerable Anuruddha and the venerable Ānanda spent the rest of the night in Dharma discourse. Then the venerable Anuruddha said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Go, avuso Ānanda, into Kusinārā and announce to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying:

“Vāseṭṭhas, the Blessed One has attained parinirvana. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied in assent to the venerable Anuruddha, and having dressed himself, carrying his robe and bowl, entered Kusinārā with a companion. [159]

The Mallas of Kusinārā mourn

6.12.2 Now at that time, the Mallas of Kusinārā were gathered in their assembly hall attending to some business. Then the venerable Ānanda went to the assembly hall of the Mallas of Kusinārā, and announced to the Mallas of Kusinārā thus:

“Vāseṭṭhas, the Tathāgata has attained parinirvana. Now is the time for you to do as you think fit.”

6.12.3 Then when they had heard the venerable Ānanda, the Mallas, the sons of the Mallas, the daughters-in-law of the Mallas, and the wives of the Mallas were grieved and saddened, afflicted at heart, and some of them lamented, with hair dishevelled; they lamented, with arms outstretched; they fell to the ground as if their feet have been cut off,⁸⁹⁹ rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

6.13 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their workers, saying:

“Come now,⁹⁰⁰ gather together incense and garlands, and all the musicians in Kusinārā!”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā brought the incense and garlands and all the musicians, and 500 yugas⁹⁰¹ of cloth [new unbleached cotton cloth],⁹⁰² to the Upavattana sal grove at Kusinārā. Having approached the Blessed One’s remains, they passed the day, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, and making canopies of flowers and arranging circles of wreaths [garlands].

6.13.2 Then this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā:

“It is too late to cremate the Blessed One’s remains today. We will cremate the Blessed One’s remains tomorrow.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā passed the second day, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, and making canopies of flowers and arranging circles of wreaths [garlands]; and they passed the third day in that way, too; and they passed the fourth day in that way, too; and they passed the fifth day in that way, too; and they passed the sixth day in that way, too.

The seventh day

6.14 Then on the seventh day, this occurred to the Mallas of Kusinārā: [160]

“We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the south of the city and we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains outside the city, in the south.”⁹⁰³

⁸⁹⁸ This whole §6.12 is similar to §§5.19-21 when the Mallas of Kusinārā were informed of the Buddha’s impending parinirvana.

⁸⁹⁹ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādaṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna, papātaṃ papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna, pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁹⁰⁰ “Come now,” *bhaṇe*, PED: (1st sg med of *bhaṇati*), “I say,” used as an interjection of emphasis, like “to be sure,” “look here.” It is a familiar term of address, often used by a king to his subjects (V 1:240, 241; Miln 21).

⁹⁰¹ First mentioned at §5.11b above; again at §6.17 below.

⁹⁰² See §5.11 above. No “teased cotton” is mentioned here: see §6.17-18 below.

⁹⁰³ *Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ naccehi gātehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garukarontā mānentā pūjentā, dakkhiṇena dakkhiṇaṃ nagarassa haritvā bāhīrena bāhiraṃ dakkhiṇato nagarassa Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpessāma ti.* Cf §6.15 n. The Mallas are probably keeping to some ancient taboo against ritually polluting the city with a dead body. So they have to skirt the city and also take an inauspicious direction for a funeral. The devatas however think otherwise [§6.15]. Cf §6.23a & n. See D:RD 2:182 n1. On the ancient Indian notion of ritual impurity of death, see Gombrich 1988:123 f.

Now at that time, eight Malla chieftains washed their heads and donned unbleached garments [as a mark of mourning], thinking,

“We will bear the Blessed One’s remains,” but they were unable to do so.

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the venerable Anuruddha:

“What is the reason, bhante, what is the cause [condition], bhante, that these eight Malla chieftains, with heads washed and donning unbleached garments, thinking of bearing the Blessed One’s remains have been unable to do so?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, it is because your intention is one thing, the intention of the devatas another.”

6.15 “But what, bhante, is the intention of the devatas?”

“Your intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is thus:

‘We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the south of the city and we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains outside the city, in the south.’

But the devatas’ intention, Vāseṭṭhas, is thus:

‘We, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with heavenly dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, will bear the Blessed One’s remains to the north of the city, enter the city through the north gate and bear the Blessed One’s remains around the middle of the city, exit through the city’s east gate, go east of the city to the Malla shrine called Makuta Bandhana,⁹⁰⁴ and there we will cremate the Blessed One’s remains.’⁹⁰⁵

“If that is the devatas’ intention, bhante, let it be so!”⁹⁰⁶

6.16 Now at that time, even the rubbish-dumps and sewers of Kusinārā were covered knee-deep in heavenly mandarava [coral-tree] flowers. Then the devatas and the Mallas of Kusinārā, honouring, respecting, esteeming and venerating the Blessed One’s remains with heavenly and human [161] dancing, music, singing, garlands, and scents, bore the Blessed One’s remains to the north of the city, entered the city through the north gate and bore the Blessed One’s remains around the middle of the city, exited through the city’s east gate, went east of the city to the Malla shrine called Makuṭa Bandhana. And there they put down the Blessed One’s remains.

Preparations for cremation

6.17 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the venerable Ānanda:⁹⁰⁷

“How shall we treat the Blessed One’s remains?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, treat the Tathāgata’s remains as you will the remains of a wheel-turning king [a just world ruler].”

“But how, bhante, is the bodily remains of a wheel-turning king to be treated?”

“Vāseṭṭhas, the body should be wrapped alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then with a layer of teased cotton. It should be done in this manner to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths],⁹⁰⁸ and then the body is placed in an oil-vat of iron. This should be covered with an iron lid. The pyre should comprise totally of fragrant material, and then cremate the body. Then a stupa [burial mound] should be built at the crossroads [where four highways meet]. This is how, Vāseṭṭhas, the remains of a wheel-turning king is to be treated.

Ānanda, just as one treats the remains of a wheel-turning king, even so, one should treat the remains of the Tathāgata. Then a stupa [cairn or burial mound] should be built for the Tathāgata at the crossroads [where four highways meet]. And they who offer a garland, scent, or perfume powder, or bow down there, or brighten their minds with faith there, it will be for their profit and welfare for a long time to come.”

6.18 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā commanded their workers:

⁹⁰⁴ This location, where the Buddha’s remains are cremated, is believed to be marked today by the Rāmabhār Stūpa (about 15 m or 50 ft high), located about 1.5 km from Māthā-kuār Shrine.

⁹⁰⁵ *Mayaṃ Bhagavato sarīraṃ dibbehi naccehi gūthehi vāditehi mālehi gandhehi sakkarontā garukarontā mānentā pūjentā, uttarena uttaraṃ nagarassa haritvā, uttarena dvārena nagaraṃ pavesetvā, majjhena majjhaṃ nagarassa haritvā, puratthimena dvārena nikkhamitvā puratthimato nagarassa Makuṭa, bandhanaṃ nāma Mallānaṃ cetiyā, ettha Bhagavato sarīraṃ jhāpessāma ti.* Cf §6.14 n.

⁹⁰⁶ *Yathā bhante devatānaṃ adhippāyo tathā hotū ti*, lit “Bhante, whatever the devatas’ intentions, let them be.”

⁹⁰⁷ This whole section parallels §5.11 (D 2:141 f).

⁹⁰⁸ See §5.11b nn.

“Come now, gather together teased cotton.”

Then the Mallas of Kusinārā wrapped the Blessed One’s remains alternately with new unbleached cotton cloth and then [162] with a layer of teased cotton, and they did this to the length of 500 yugas [plough-lengths]. Then the body was placed in an oil-vat of iron, which was then covered with an iron lid. The pyre was made up totally of fragrant material.

MAHĀ KASSAPA

Mahā Kassapa’s last respects

6.19 ⁹⁰⁹ Now at that time, the venerable Mahā Kassapa was journeying on the highroad from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, numbering some 500. Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa stepped down from the highroad and sat down under a certain tree.

Now at that time, a certain naked ascetic [ājīvaka], ⁹¹⁰ holding a mandarava [coral-tree] flower, was journeying along the highroad from Kusinārā to Pāvā. The venerable Mahā Kassapa saw the naked ascetic coming from afar. Seeing the naked ascetic, the venerable Mahā Kassapa said this to the naked ascetic:

“Avuso, do you know our Teacher?”

“Yes, avuso, I do know. Seven days ago today the recluse Gotama attained parinirvana. For that reason, I found this mandarava flower.”

Then, some of those monks who were still not free from lust lamented, with arms outstretched; fallen to the ground as if their feet have been cut off, ⁹¹¹ rolling to and fro, crying:

“Too soon has the Blessed One entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Sugata [Wellfarer] entered parinirvana! Too soon has the Eye in the world disappeared!”

But those monks that were free from lust accept it mindfully and fully aware,
‘Impermanent are conditioned things! How else could it be?’

The old Subhadda

6.20 Now at that time, seated amongst the group was **Subhadda**, ⁹¹² who had gone forth in old age. Subhadda then said this to the monks:

⁹⁰⁹ There are two canonical versions of the next 2 sections [§§6.19-20]: the **Dīgha** version (Mahā Parinibbāna S) gives in narrative form (as before), and the **Vinaya** version (V 2:284-308 = Cullavagga 11), put into the mouth of Mahā Kassapa himself. An interesting point here is that in the Dīgha version, **Mahā Kassapa’s speech** is put after the outburst of the old Subhadda (different from the newly ordained Subhadda) [§§5.23-29]. The Vinaya, however, puts it before the old Subhadda’s remark—that is, the last two paragraphs in the Dīgha are transposed in the Vinaya (D:RD 2:75). **Hermann Oldenberg** was the first western scholar to point out (*Vinaya Texts*, 1881:xxvi-xxviii) the parallel between the two texts. He suggests that the change is due to the position occupied by this episode in the Vinaya. It is there used as an introduction to the account of the Council of Rājagṛha held, according to the Theravāda, to counteract such sentiments as were expressed by the old Subhadda’s outburst. It was considered more appropriate, therefore, that *in that connection*, **Subhadda’s words should come last**, to lead up to what follows. The whole story is then interpolated from our sutta. But the last paragraph is transposed, and the whole is put into Mahā Kassapa’s mouth, on whose advice the Council is said to have been convened. **RO Franke**, in his article, “The Buddha councils at Rājagaha and Vesālī,” gives various details showing how Cullavagga 11 of the Vinaya is heavily dependent on the MPS (1908:8-18). Unlike Oldenberg and Franke, however, **TW Rhys Davids** rejects the notion that Cv 11 borrowed from MPS, suggesting that “the Subhadda story may have been in existence before either Dīgha or Vinaya was put into its present shape. If so, it was doubtless current in the form now preserved by the Dīgha; and was changed by the compilers of the Vinaya...it is quite possible that the two books—Dīgha and Vinaya—may have been put together, as we now have them, at the same time” (D:RD 2:76 n1). See An Yang-Gyu, “The date and the origin of the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta,” 2001:64-66 & Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004:6.27.

⁹¹⁰ **Ājīvaka**. The naked ascetics (V 1:291, 2:130) are followers of Makkhali Gosāla (the teacher of fatalism or determinism), and regarded as the worst of the non-Buddhist religious. See **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 1:238) and also S 1:66. Upaka was a naked ascetic who converted when he met the newly awakened Buddha (V 1:8; M 1:71; J 1:81; DhA 4: 71 f).

⁹¹¹ “As if their feet have been cut off,” reading *chinnaṃ pādāṃ viya papatanti* throughout following Se. PTS has *chinna,papātāṃ papatanti* throughout (D 16,5.6/2:140, 6.10/2:157, 6.11/2:158). Cf *chinna,pādā* (J 6:301, 303).

⁹¹² **The old Subhadda (Subhadra)**. The Mahā,vagga of the Vinaya has an interesting story of “a former barber, one gone forth in old age” (*vuḍḍha,pabbajito nahāpita,pubbo*) who, on learning that the Buddha and 1250 monks are coming to Ātumā [§4.30], instructs his two sons, “sweet-voiced, witty, skilled, skillful in their craft in the profession of their own teacher,” to go from house to house to beg for “*nālī* measures of offerings, and collect salt and oil and husked rice and solid food” (begging for such things are not allowed by the Vinaya) to prepare conjei for the Buddha and the monks. On learning of this, the Buddha laid down two rules entailing wrong-doing (*dukkata*): (1) “One who who gone forth should not make cause (others) to take what is not allowable.” (2) “One who was formerly a barber should not carry about a barber’s

“Enough, brothers, do not sorrow! Do not weep! We are free of that great sage! We were harassed⁹¹³ thus: ‘This is allowable to you! This is not allowable to you!’ But now we can do what we like, and not do what we do not like!”⁹¹⁴

Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa addressed the monks:

“Enough, avusos, do not grieve! Do not weep! [163] Has the Blessed One not told you before:⁹¹⁵ ‘All those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer difference, separation and change [becoming other]? What else do you expect? Whatever is born, become, formed [compounded], is liable to decay—that it should not decay is impossible.’”⁹¹⁶

CREMATION AND RELICS

The cremation

6.21⁹¹⁷ Now at that time, the four Malla chieftains, having washed their hair and donned unbleached garments, thought, “We will light the Blessed One’s pyre,” but they were unable to light it.

Then the Malla chieftains said this to the venerable Anuruddha:

“Bhante, what is the reason for this, venerable Anuruddha? What is the cause [condition] for this, that we having washed our hair and donned unbleached garments, thinking, ‘We will light the Blessed One’s pyre,’ but were unable to light it?”

“Vāsetṭhas, it is because the intention of the devatas is different.”

equipment.” (V 1:249 f). On *nāli* (a measure), see V:H 1:12 n2. Buddhaghosa (DA 2:599) identifies the “one gone forth in old age” as **the old Subhadda** (then a novice, *sāmaṇera*) mentioned in Mahā Parinibbāna S as being relieved at the Buddha’s passing (D 16,6.20/2:162), and refers to the V episode at length (DA 2:599). In neither passage, he was mentioned as “venerable” (*āyasmā*), as at the time of the Buddha’s visit to Ātumā, he was a novice (*sāmaṇera*) (DA 2:599). **Dullabha S 1** (A 5.59/3:78) & **Dullabha S 2** (A 5.60/3:78 f) each lists 5 things difficult to find in one gone forth in old age.

⁹¹³ “We were harassed,” PTS *uppadutā* wr for *upaddutā* (Be Ce), pp of *upaddavati*, “he oppresses, assails, harrasses, tyrannizes.”

⁹¹⁴ In **Cullavagga** (V 11.1/2:284), Mahā Kassapa cites this statement as good reason to hold a council for standardizing the Dhamma & Vinaya “before what is not Dharma shines out and Dharma is obscured, before what is not Vinaya shines out and Vinaya [discipline] is obscured; before those who speak what is not-dhamma become strong and those who speak what is Dharma become weak; before those who speak what is not-discipline become strong and those who speak what is Vinaya become weak.” Thus the First Council was held during the Rains Retreat following the Buddha’s parinirvana.

⁹¹⁵ This nested quote is stock: (D 16) §§3.48 = 5.144 = 6.11a = 6.20.

⁹¹⁶ It is interesting to note that neither Mahā Kassapa nor any other monks responded to the old Subhadda’s rude remark. Buddhaghosa unconvincingly explains that Kassapa was silent fearing that his reproaching Subhadda could reveal to the local people that the Sangha quarrelled in the Buddha’s absence (DA 2:601). The Skt texts and the Chinese trs give various accounts. **The Skt version** say that when a certain old monk makes a bad remark, the gods do not allow Mahā Kāśyapa’s pupils to hear it, only Kāśyapa himself hears it. **The Yo-hsing-ching** (T1.28c13) says that when Subhadra makes his remark, Kāśyapa is disappointed. **The Pan-ni-hung-ching** (T1.189b24) similarly says that Kāśyapa is disappointed but makes not response. **The Fo-pan-ni-huang-ching** (T1.174c25) says that when a certain makes the bad remark, all the monks present censure him and report him to the gods, who remove him from the Sangha. Interestingly, Kāśyapa is silent here. Does this imply that Kāśyapa does not know of the incident? **The Ta-pa-nieh-pan-ching** (T1.206c19 ff) similarly say that Kāśyapa and his followers do not respond at all, and when the “three baskets” have been compiled, he does not make any mention of the incident either. In **the Mūlasarvāstivādin version** (T24.401a17), the gods intervene, allowing only Kāśyapa to hear Subhadra. Kāśyapa stops his journey to admonish Subhadra on impermanence. Then he says, “Enough, stop talking about this incident. We should go quickly!” Then, Kāśyapa, realizing that the long-lived gods’ concern that the “three baskets” might be reduced to ashes unless their compilation is made, proposes their compilation (T24.402c9). Here however, it is the god’s foreboding, not Subhadra’s remark that moves Kaśyapa to hold the recital. In summary, then, we can conclude from the various versions that Kaśyapa does not ignore Subhadra’s remark, and that he does not fall back on this incident to hold the first council. However, it is curious that no mention of the First Council is made at all in this sutta: see George Bond 1982:18-22.

An Yang-Gyu: “In my view of the incident, as it really took place by chance around the time of the Buddha’s *parinibbāna*, the author of the Proto-MPS could not help recording it. He might think it worth recording, because this incident enables listeners to lessen their too excessive grief at the loss of the Buddha, by feeling resentment against the corrupt monk, and concern about the preserving of the Buddha’s teaching and the unity of his community in his absence” (2001:71). See An Yang-Gyu, “The date and origin of the Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta,” 2001:53, 69-72.

⁹¹⁷ The following sections [§§6.21-26], on the Buddha’s cremation and distribution of his relics, are unique to this Sutta.

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6.21b “But what, bhante, is the intention of the devatas?”

“The intention of the devatas, Vāsetṭhas, is thus:

“The venerable Mahā Kassapa is journeying on the highroad from Pāvā to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, numbering some 500. So long as the venerable Mahā Kassapa had not bowed his head at the Blessed One’s feet, you will not be able to light the Blessed One’s pyre.”

“If that is the devatas’ intention, bhante, let it be so!”

6.22 Then the venerable Mahā Kassapa approached the Makuṭa Bandhana shrine of the Mallas outside Kusinārā, and went up to the Blessed One’s pyre. Arranging his upper robe to one side [baring the right shoulder], putting his palms together lotus-like, he thrice circumambulated the pyre rightwise. The Blessed One’s feet protruded (from the pyre) and he saluted them.⁹¹⁸

The 500 monks, too, arranging their upper robes to one side [baring the right shoulder], putting their palms together lotus-like, thrice circumambulated the pyre rightwise, and then saluted the Blessed One’s feet.

As soon as the venerable Mahā Kassapa and the 500 monks had done their salutation, the Blessed One’s pyre, of its own accord, burst into flames.

6.23 Of the Blessed One’s burnt up body, there was to be seen no skin, nor tissue,⁹¹⁹ nor flesh, nor sinew, nor synovial fluid; not even soot—only the relics [burnt bones]⁹²⁰ remained.

Just as when ghee or oil is burned, neither ash nor soot remains, even so, **there was to be seen no skin, nor tissue, nor flesh, nor sinew, nor synovial fluid; not even soot—only the relics remained.**⁹²¹

Of the 500 rounds of cloth,⁹²² neither the innermost nor the outermost were burned up.⁹²³

And when the Blessed One’s body had burned up, streams of water fell from the sky and put out the Blessed One’s pyre. Water from the ground and sal trees,⁹²⁴ too, shot forth putting out the Blessed One’s pyre. The Mallas of Kusinārā, too, put out the Blessed One’s pyre with all their fragrant water.⁹²⁵

⁹¹⁸ **Buddhaghosa** says that Mahā Kassapa enters the 4th dhyana and uses it as the basis for a psychic feat so that the Buddha’s feet would appear out of their extensive wrappings (DA 2:603). The **Dulva**, however, says that Mahā Kaśyapa uncovers the body and worships it. Then he changes the garments that enshrouded the Blessed One with those from his own store. And when the coffin cover is replaced, fire bursts forth from the pile and consumes the body (Dulva 645^b = Rockhill 144). See D:RD 2:186 n1 (qu **Spence Hardy**): “Just before a Jew is taken out of the house to be buried, the relatives and acquaintances of the departed stand around the coffin; when the feet are uncovered; and each in rotation lays hold of the great toes, and begs pardon for any offence given to the deceased, and requests a favourable mention of them in the next world” (*A Manual of Buddhism*, 1853:348).

⁹¹⁹ “Tissue,” *cammaṇ*, lit “hide,” but here refers to the subcutaneous layer next to the bone, “integument” (S 2:238 = A 4:129; PvA 68). Here I have used a free tr, following Vajirā & Story (1998).

⁹²⁰ Prior to this, the Buddha’s body is referred to as *sarīra* (singular) [§5.11]. Here the plural is used (*sarīre*), meaning “relics,” and so remains for the rest of the text. On the significance of these relics, see Schopen, “Monks and the Relic Cult in the *Mahāparibbāna-sutta*,” 1997:99-113 & Wynne, “How old is the Suttapiṭaka?” 2003:5-8.

⁹²¹ This important passage clearly states what remains of the Buddha’s body: one wonders how to explain the recent claims in Singapore and Malaysia of “relics” of the Buddha’s blood, veins and skin! Comy describes the Buddha relics as follows: “the relics are like jasmine buds, or washed pearls, or gold” (*sumana, makuṭa, sadisā ca dhota, mutta, sadisā ca suvaṇṇa, sadisā ca dhātuyo*) (DA 2:603 f). On the **authenticity of relics**, Trainor notes, “I have never come across a textual account from the Theravāda tradition of any effort to distinguish authentic relics on the basis of their appearance. The relics I saw in Sri Lanka varied in appearance. Some had the brownish color and irregular surface texture that one would expect to see in old bones. Others were smoothly polished and pearly in appearance” (1997:120 n80). On relic authenticity, see **Intro (7.10)** above.

⁹²² See §6.18 & Intro (7.1).

⁹²³ *Tesaṇ ca pañcannaṃ dussa, yuga, satānaṃ dve ca dussāni ḍayhiṃsu yaṇ ca sabba, abhantarimaṇ yaṇ ca bāhiraṇ*. Following BE Ce *na dayhiṃsu*; Ee Se omits *na* (“were burnt up”). The reading *na dayhiṃsu* is attested by the Skt *Mahā, -parinirvāṇam, sūtra* (ed Waldschmidt, 1951). J Strong suggests that the unburnt layers have to do with keeping the relics separate from the ashes of the fire (but does not mention the Pali variants). See Gethin 2008:281 n95.

⁹²⁴ *Udaka, sālato* (Be Ee & Be at DA 604); vl *-sālake* in DA:Ee 604; these are wr for *udakaṃ sālato* (Ce Se) (DPL). Comy gives 2 possible explanations of *udaka, sālā*: (1) the sal tree around rained miraculously from their trunks, branches and leaves; (2) water burst forth from the ground and formed a sort of ring “like a crystal diadem” (*phalika, vaṭamsaka, sadisā*) around the pyre (DA 2:604). See Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāparinirvana Sūtra*, 1944-48: 430 & *Überlieferung vom Lebensende des Buddha*, 1950-51:430; also RO Franke, D tr: *Dīghanikāya...in Auswahl übersetzt*, Göttingen, 1913:251 n5.

⁹²⁵ The description given in this § reflects the ritual purity of the Buddha’s death. See §6.14n above.

Claims for the Buddha relics

6.23.2 Then the Mallas of Kusinārā installed the Blessed One’s relics in an enclosure [a cage] of spears, surrounding it with a wall of bows in their assembly hall. Then they honoured, served, respected, esteemed and venerated them with dancing, music, singing, garlands, and fragrances.

6.24 Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya; I, too, am a kshatriya. I, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. I will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Licchavis of Vesālī heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Licchavis of Vesālī sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Sakyas [Sākyas] of Kapila,vatthu heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Sakyas of Kapila,vatthu sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was our foremost relative. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Bulis [Bulakas] of Alla,kappa [Cala,kalpa] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Bulis of Alla,kappa sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Koliyas [Kraudyas] of Rāma,gāma heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Koliyas of Rāma,gāma sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the brahmin Vetha,dīpaka [Visnu,dvīpa] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the brahmin Vetha,dīpaka sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya, but I am a brahmin. I, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. I will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

Then the Mallas of Pāvā [Pāpā] heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Mallas of Pāvā sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying, “The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we, too, are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One’s relics. We will build a great stupa over the Blessed One’s relics.”

6.25 When this was said, the Mallas of Kusinārā said this to the sanghas and groups:⁹²⁶ [166]

“The Blessed One attained parinirvana within the confines of our village. We will not give away any portion of the relics.”

⁹²⁶ “The sanghas and groups,” *saṅghe gaṇe*. “Sangha” here refer to all those who have come to have a share of the relics, except for Ajātasattu’s representative, here referred to as “group.” “Sangha” here refers to the ancient republics of the Licchavis, Mallas, etc. There is a hint of tension here, esp evident in §6.25 where the Mallas of Kusinārā refuse to give away any Buddha relics. The imminent danger of war over the relics is depicted in the bas-reliefs of the Sañcī stupa: Marshall & Foucher, *Monuments of Sāñchī*, 1940 1:112-119, 214 f, pls 15, 61; Strong 2004:119. The appeal of relics is clearly not just spiritual, but also mundane due to their portability and promise of power. See foll n on the Buddha’s awareness of this danger and how he prevented it (UA 402); see also Intro (7.10).

Distribution of the Buddha relics⁹²⁷

6.25.2 When this was said, the brahmin Doṇa⁹²⁸ said this to the sanghas and groups:

Listen, sirs, to a word from me,
Our Buddha is a speaker [teacher] of patience.⁹²⁹
It is not right that the highest individual's
Relics-distribution should bring strife.
Let there be, sirs, the common good, the one path, for all:
As avusos, let's make eight the shares:
Let there be stupas far and wide,
That all have faith in the One with Eyes!⁹³⁰

“In that case, brahmin, divide the Blessed One's relics into eight equal portions and distribute them!”

“Yes, sir,” the brahmin Doṇa replied in assent to the sanghas and groups, and he divided the Blessed One's relics into eight equal portions and distributed them, saying:

“Sirs, please give me this urn [measuring vessel]. I, too, will build a great stupa over the urn.”⁹³¹

And they gave the urn to the brahmin Doṇa.

6.26 Then the Moriyas [Mauryas] of Pippali, vana heard:

“It is said that the Blessed One has attained parinirvana at Kusinārā.”

Then the Moriyas of Pippali, vana sent a messenger to the Mallas of Kusinārā, saying,

“The Blessed One was a kshatriya; we too are kshatriyas. We, too, deserve a portion of the Blessed One's relics. We, too, will build a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics.”

“There is no more share of the Blessed One's relics. The Blessed One's relics have been divided up. Take from these cinders.”

And they took from those cinders.

6.27 Then the rajah Ajātasattu Vedehi,putta of Magadha built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics. [167]

The Licchavis, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Vesālī.
The Sakyas, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Kapila, vatthu.
The Bulis, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Allakappa.
The Koliyas, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Rāma, gāma. ⁹³²
The brahmin Veṭṭhadīpaka, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics in	Veṭṭha, dīpa.
The Mallas of Pāvā, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Pāvā.
The Mallas of Kusinārā, too,	built a great stupa over the Blessed One's relics at	Kusinārā.

⁹²⁷ The Udāna Comy gives 3 reasons why the Buddha chooses to pass away in Kusi, nārā, ie (1) it would be the occasion for teaching **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17), SD 36.12; (2) the wanderer's Subhadda's conversion, and (3) the brahmin Doṇa would fairly distribute his relics, thus preventing a bloodshed (UA 402). See (**Pāda**) **Doṇa S** (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).

⁹²⁸ Doṇa, says Comy, seizing the opportunity, hid the right eye-tooth of the Buddha in his turban, but Shakra saw this, and thinking that Doṇa was incapable of showing suitable honour to the relic, removed it and kept it in the Cūḷā, mani Cetiya [the crown jewel shrine] in Tāvataṃsa (DA 2:609). **The Dhātu, vaṃsa** adds that Doṇa hid a second eye-tooth between his toes, and a third inside his clothing. The second was subsequently stolen by the Nāga king Jaya, sena, who enshrined in his realm, and the third, by was taken by someone from Gandhāra, who enshrined it there (Dhātṅ 18 f). **The Cūḷā, maṇi Cetiya**, said to be 1 league high, was created by Shakra to enshrine the hair cut off by the Buddha when he donned the ascetic's robe on the bank of the Anoma (J 1:65). After the Buddha's parinirvana, Shakra enshrined his right collar bone there, too (BA 235; Mahv 17.20). According to Sinhala hagiography, on the request of the novice Sumana, who was sent by the elder Mahinda, it is said, Shakra handed over the right collar bone over to Sumana, but kept the right eye-tooth. The right collar bone was finally enshrined at Thūp'ārāma (VA 1:84 ff; Mahv 17.13 ff). On Doṇa, see (**Pāda**) **Doṇa S** (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (4). See also Strong 2004:119-121, 158 f.

⁹²⁹ “A speaker [teacher] of patience,” *khanti, vādī*, an allusion to **Khanti, vādī J** (J 313) where the Bodhisattva shows the highest patience and lovingkindness against the extreme cruelty of a king against him.

⁹³⁰ It is prob here that Doṇa is tardionally said to have recited his lion-roar, the Doṇa, gajjita (“Doṇa's thunder”): see (**Pāda**) **Doṇa S** (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2.2) & **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17), SD 36.12 (1.2).

⁹³¹ This is the first incident of a relic theft in the Canon. See **Intro (7.10)**; but cf (**Pāda**) **Doṇa S** (A 4.36/2:37 f), SD 36.13 (2).

⁹³² **The Buddha relics of Rāma, gāma** (situated on the Ganges bank) has a fascinating history/mythology behind it, as recorded in **Thūpa, vaṃsa**, a late Pali hagiographical chronicle of Sri Lanka (13th cent). It recounts how the Rāma, gāma relics were washed into the waters during a great flood. The naga-king, Mahā, kāḷa, saved the relics and enshrined them in great splendour in his Mañjerika nāga abode, worshipping them with lavish offerings. See Trainor 1997:124-135.

The brahmin Doṇa, too, built a great stupa over the urn.
 The Moriyas of Pippali, vana, too, built a great stupa over the cinders at Pippali, vana.⁹³³
 So it was in the days of old.⁹³⁴

Stupas over the Buddha's four eye-teeth⁹³⁵

6.28 Eight measures of relics of the One with Eyes, seven were honoured in Jambu, dīpa [India]
 And one measure of the highest hero was kept by the naga kings in Rāmagāma.
 One eye-tooth⁹³⁶ by the Three Heavens [realm of the 33]⁹³⁷ honoured, and one in Gandhāra revered.
 The victorious Kalinga king has one more,⁹³⁸ and the nagas, too, honour one.
 This Mother Earth, her ground decked in their glory with the highest gifts.
 Thus is the One with Eyes' relics well honoured by the honoured, **[168]**
 Worshipped by the leader of the devas, by naga chiefs, and by lords of men,
 Their hands clasped in homage—for hard it is to find the Buddha in a hundred aeons.⁹³⁹

— evaṃ —

⁹³³ **Mahā.vaṃsa Ṭikā** says that the Moriyas were orig Sakya princes of Kapila, vatthu, who escaped to the Himalayas to save themselves from Viḍuḍabha's massacre, and founded a city there. As such, Asoka, the greatest of the Maurya emperors, was a kinsman of the Buddha. (MahvṬ 183). See further DPPN: Moriya.

⁹³⁴ This seems to be the original end of sutta, and Buddhaghosa's comy ends here. Comy says that these stanzas are those of the elders at the Third Council. Comy makes no remark on the following stanzas, except saying that they were added by the elders in Lanka (DA 2:615). Rhys Davids notes that the additional verse found in the Phayre MS is in the same way probably added in Burma (D:RD 2:191).

⁹³⁵ This stanza is added by the elders in Lanka (*Tambapaṇṇi, therehi vuttā*, DA 2:615). Interestingly, **the Dulva** (Tibetan Vinaya) stanza agrees closely here with regards to the 4 eye-teeth (Dulva f 652^b; Rockhill 147). It is possible that the Sinhalese elders learn of this from the Mahāyāna (Vaipulya) tradition in Sri Lanka and incorporated it into our Sutta for the sake of completeness.

We have here two relic lists, which “bear witness to an expanding textual tradition that has recorded and thereby authenticated the dispersion of relics as new devotional centres have arisen claiming to possess relics of the Buddha” (Trainor 1997:121). Trainor uses “textual” here “in an extended sense to include a relatively fixed, orally transmitted composition” (id fn). See prec n.

⁹³⁶ “Eye-tooth,” *dāṭhā* (f), ie a canine.

⁹³⁷ “The Three Heavens,” *ti, diva*, poetic form for *Tāvātimsa* (heaven of the 33 devas) (D 2:167, 272; S v430/ 1:96, v699/1:181).

⁹³⁸ **The Dāṭhā,vaṃsa** is a hagiology of how this eye-tooth that is said to have been taken to Sri Lanka by a brahmin woman in 4th cent during the reign of Sirimeghavaṇṇa, and is now kept in the Tooth Relic Temple, Kandy.

⁹³⁹ On whether the Buddha is still living, see **Intro (9.7)** & is he really dead? See **Intro (9.8)**.

Appendix 1

Afterword: Buddhism after the Buddha

1 From light to light

World religions, after their founders' death, invariably have their disciples build on, expand and innovate on the founder's teachings. When we study or practise, for example, Theravāda today, are we practising the Buddha's teachings or following Buddhaghosa's instruction along with various Sinhalese biases and peculiarities? When we practise Chinese Buddhism are we practising our sifu's teachings or the Buddha's (they are not always the same).

Of course, there are those who say does it really matter? Religion is a person's faith, so we should be prescriptive about it. I agree, and I am not saying that we should not interpret Buddhism, but that in doing so, are we throwing the baby out along with the bathwater? If we are talking about Sakyamuni Buddha, we are not talking about Maitreya, for example (who is not yet a Buddha, anyway).

Understandably, Buddhism needs to be interpreted or adapted so that the many can understand it and so benefit from it. And yet these are provisional teachings often answering immediate needs and measuring up to the expectations and eccentricities of the audience. More importantly, such provisional teachings should be carried further leading progressively towards the true Dharma. We are not shepherds herding a flock, who end up in the slaughterhouses anyway. The Dharma teacher is like a loving and wise parent raising multitudinous children of various whims and wisdom, and we have to raise them to be healthy, happy and spiritually independent adults, singular jewels in Indra's cosmic net of jewels.

In short, basic Buddhist missiology should be two-tiered. On the worldly level, the crowd needs to be entertained with fun Dharma so that its less defilements find acceptable links with the Dharma, that is, sugar-coating the spiritual medicine for their ills. In due course, we have to teach our patients to learn to take their medicine themselves and keep to a healthy life-style.

Buddhist missiology. On the spiritual level, the individual must have direct access to the Dharma, either through mindfulness exercises ("meditation") and the Sutta teachings. Underlying all this, there is the sustained support of a systematic Buddhist education system and a Right Livelihood philosophy. This means that our community needs of Buddhist college, better still, a Buddhist university. The graduates from such institutions, if they choose the Buddhist ministry, should be gainfully employed by Buddhist temples, centres and groups. Such properly educated and trained ministers surely will benefit society and themselves than will the occasional self-taught gurus and self-propelled sifus.

2 From self-reliance to relics

The Buddha founded the world's first missionary religion: he went forth to teach the Dharma for all who will listen. The Buddha's compassion and wisdom flows in the tolerance and resilience of the Buddhist tradition. As Buddhism spreads beyond India, it adopted and adapted itself to indigenous ideas and ways. Such vitalizing developments in due course turn Buddhism into a **world religion**. Sometimes, this protean quality entails a heavy cost. More often than not, the new religious forms and ideas, directly or indirectly, contradict the teachings of the founder. Much of Tibetan Buddhism, for example, is no different from the indigenous Bon shamanism with a generous smattering of Saivism.

After the Buddha's parinirvana, the majority of his followers refuse to believe that he has really died, or that although his physical form is no more, his spiritual form still persists. The Buddha relics might have at first been regarded as the ideal objects to remember a dead teacher by, but in due course, faithful followers attribute **special powers and presence** to them. When these relics (or their replica) are enshrined in a stupa or shrine, the structure itself is regarded as the Buddha's living person or presence. The true Buddha is no more the historical Gautama, but a docetic presence or superhuman deity. The Buddha's Dharma became Buddhism.

Once spirituality is externalized or objectified, and its mythical and symbolic qualities forgotten or misconstrued, these externals next go into the "**commodity**" phase: spiritual becomes a thing that one supplicates, negotiates with, and invokes its power. The most extreme of this commodification of spirituality, of course, simony, religion comes to be measured in worldly and financial benefits.

3 Monastic business

After the Buddha's passing, especially with the rise of the more liberal Mahāsaṅghika, we see the growing laicization of monastic life. **Archaeological field work** and scholarly analyses since John Marshall (mid-18th century), Alexander Cunningham (1920s), up to Gregory Schopen in our times, have shown that the monasteries openly collected money, traded, loaned money, charged interests and made “merit-making” an important part of their lives. Translated into our own times, this refers to monastics having bank accounts, credit cards, property, expensive cars, and affairs. Perhaps they are emulating the Bodhisattva Siddhartha living in the pleasure palaces of the three seasons replete with lotus ponds. Perhaps they have yet to see the four sights. So nothing is new.

These scholars, looking at artifacts and ancient sites left behind by the worldly monastic past, have given us valuable historical evidence to mull over the fate of post-Buddha Buddhism (or at least Indian Buddhism). If such archaeology and scholarship have opened a dark window to our religious past—one of dead monks, bones, stones and monastic business—our spirituality directs us to open a different window, a bright one, indeed a door, to **the Buddha's living word of inner peace and liberating wisdom**. For spirituality is not transmitted through relics, stupas, monasteries or worldly artifacts, but flows as spiritual lifeblood through living teachers and practitioners.

4 The Dharma has ended for some, but not for others

Gregory Schopen's research and writing methodology give us some insights into modern Buddhist sociology and missiology, especially in regards to modern fieldwork in Buddhism in Malaysia and in Singapore where Sinhalese Buddhism has had great social success amongst the English-speaking Buddhists and yet dismally fails to nurture local vocations even after a century of mission—in other words, the Sinhalese mission still remains a “mission,” unlike say, the Theravada Buddhism in the US or the UK where local vocations are growing with much shorter history.⁹⁴⁰ It is important to remember that when the arhat **Mahinda** came to Sri Lanka,⁹⁴¹ he ordained native Sinhalese, Mahā Ariṭṭha and 55 of his brothers into the order at Cetiya, giri.⁹⁴² In due course, Anulā and her 500 companions were ordained as nuns by Saṅgha, mittā at the Upāsikā, vihāra in Anurāda, pura.⁹⁴³ With these events, the teaching (*sāsana*) was established in Sri Lanka and Sinhala Sangha grew.

⁹⁴⁰ H L Seneviratne, in his *The Work of Kings* (1999), asserts that a significant number of Sinhalese monks often use social service as a cover for questionable activities, “going overseas and establishing themselves in foreign lands, facilitated by both philanthropists of those lands and by expatriate communities of Buddhists. A few of these monks control vast revenues and live the life of busy executives, replete with symbols like Mercedes Benzes and BMWs and cellular phones. These monks have a foothold both in the country of their adoption and in Sri Lanka, and hold immigrant status in several countries. At the lower end of this financially comfortable class are the salary-earning monks, mostly graduates, who, especially if they also have support from laity as well as productive land, are able to invest money in business[es] like repair shops, taxi services, rental properties and tuition classes. A small minority also commercially practice astrology, medicine and various occultisms, the ‘beastly arts’ that are taboo for monks. Throughout history there were monks who practiced these, but they now do so with a new sense of legitimacy and commercialism. These come from the new definition of monk's role as social service” (1999:336).

An important example suffices. The **Sinhalese mission** (mostly of the goyigama-caste Siyam Nikāya) in Malaysia often appears to be foreign business ventures where the local Chinese faithfuls are regarded as a rich source of religious funds and this market, nurtured and secured with a “Dale Carnegie” (win friends and influence people) approach to Buddhism. Either these missionaries deem the local followers as being incapable of learning Buddhism beyond the prescribed and popular texts or that the limited knowledge of the congregation serves their purposes better. A third possible reason, a corollary to the finance-centred goals of such missions, is that these missionaries lack the spirituality to attract and nurture such vocations. The worldliness and problems attending such a Buddhist business is reported in such works as **the Young Buddhist magazines** (1970s-80s) published by the Singapore Buddha-yana Organization and edited by Ānanda Maṅgala (1917-1986, a Sinhalese monk of the Amarapura Nikāya), and more recently in works like H L Seneviratne, *The Work of Kings* (1999). A proper socioanthropological study of this situation would surely reveal interesting living parallels to Gregory Schopen's own archaeological fieldwork on the ancient monasteries of India (see biblio). Schopen's works, however, should be used with care, as they can be insensitive to the early Buddhist texts.

⁹⁴¹ Dīpv 7.18-19, 12.39-54; Mahv 5.195, 13, 14; VA 61-105.

⁹⁴² Mahv 16.10 f; VA 82 f.

⁹⁴³ Dīpv 15.73 ff; Mahv 15.18 f, 19.65; VA 90 f.

Such historical realities of Buddhism should be comparatively studied with the “accommodation” method of the Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) (whose work would have converted much of China if not for papal bungling) and with the “Nevius method” of the Protestant missionary John Nevius (1829-93) (whose work has produced phenomenal success in church growth in Korea, making it one of the largest Christian communities in Asia).⁹⁴⁴

The dead, bones, stones, and monastic businesses and affairs are still alive and well all around us today. Perhaps this is a religious response to worldly wealth, power and pleasure that religion has always been associated with throughout its history. Perhaps it is simply out of pure greed, lust and desperation that people turn to religion. However, greed, lust, desperation and their likes, are older than religion, but it is because of them that Buddhas and spiritual teachers have arisen in the world. The Dharma-ending age may have descended upon many, but for many of those who are islands unto themselves, **the Dharma still guides them** just as the Buddha himself would have. It is just a matter of which direction we choose to look to.

The Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta is the Buddha’s last will and testament to the world. Throughout the sutta we see the Buddha as a humane being, exhorting us to keep to the timeless path of the Dharma. Even in the face of miraculous reports, we see the Buddha admonishing us to look to our inner goodness and self-power. The supreme worship is not our adoration for the Buddha, but practising the teachings. If we like the cook’s food, our hunger is never satiated by building an altar to worship the cook, whether out of gratitude or the desire for more, but to learn how to prepare that food (and share it with others), and most importantly, to eat it and live a healthy life. Without partaking of this spiritual food, one will be ever be spiritually hungry or at least under-nourished.

5 The engaged observer

5.1 The second millennium opened auspiciously with the publication of *Buddhist Theology*⁹⁴⁵ in 2000, with which it may be said that academics who are *soi-disant* (self-proclaimed, in a fond sense) Buddhists finally came out of the closet:

...this means, first, that Buddhist theologians take some particular Buddhist tradition to be normative for them, to constrain and order their intellectual work, and to provide a technical lexicon and a set of intellectual purposes or goals. Second, it means that Buddhist theologians understand their own works to be a contribution to the development of the tradition out of which they speak, think, and write: they want, perhaps, to offer tradition-specific interpretations of or judgments about contemporary phenomena; or they want to develop the tradition’s understanding of itself; or they want to apply the tradition’s claims and understandings in a critical fashion to lively opposed claims and understanding found outside any Buddhist tradition.

(Paul Griffiths, review of *Buddhist Theology*, in *Journal of Global Buddhism* 1 2000:56 f)⁹⁴⁶

A growing number of the new-millennium western scholars of Buddhism feel that the best way of studying of Buddhism is by a practising Buddhism, or as Lama John Makransky (an associate professor of theology at Boston College, Massachusetts, USA, and a Dzogchen practitioner) puts it in chapter 6, “Historical Consciousness as an offering to the trans-historical Buddha” of *Buddhist Theology*:

Religious Studies, including Buddhist studies, has begun to shed light on the historical nature of Buddhist traditions, only Buddhist traditions can reflect critically upon the implication of such findings for their own systematic understandings, practice and relevance to our time.

(p1 = Jackson & Makransky, 2000: ch 6)

5.2 This approach is of at least two advantages for Buddhism and one for other religions. The interest that people have shown in Buddhism is precisely because of its “truth and transformative value” (id). Moreover, as “Buddhist theology,” Buddhist scholars of Buddhism

can now increasingly appropriate the academy’s critical tools for the use of Buddhist tradition: to shine new light upon its historically conditioned patterns of thought and practice, to learn better how those inherited patterns have worked to communicate, or sometimes obscure, the truth and transformative

⁹⁴⁴ On the success of Ricci and Nevius, see eg David Ching, *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea*: State University of New York Press, 2002 esp ch 5.

⁹⁴⁵ Jackson, Roger & John Makransky (eds), *Buddhist Theology: Critical reflections by contemporary Buddhist scholars*. Curzon, Richmond, Surrey, 2000.

⁹⁴⁶ *Journal of Global Buddhism* 1, 2000:56-60. <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/1/griffiths001.html>.

power of Dharma, and thus, in what new ways the Dharma may need to be understood and expressed in our time.

The larger and growing number of people in contemporary cultures with serious interest in Buddhism do not look to it primarily as a basis for fascinating discussions (a primary criterion of topics selection for Religious Studies forums), but for its truth and transformative potential. They include not only those who may identify themselves as contemporary Buddhists, but prominently also Christians, Jews and others who find that Buddhist teaching or practice sheds further light for them upon the truth of their own traditions, or upon possibilities for integration of those truths into life.

(Jackson & Makransky, op cit)

In other words, when Buddhist scholars of Buddhism study and discuss it with a significant level of academic discipline, its truth and transformative value will reach a wider audience and benefit a greater number, whether they call themselves Buddhist or not.

5.3 To keep this high academic standard, Buddhists themselves have to show a moral responsibility in their learning and teaching of the Buddhism. Buddhists have to be more aware of the implications of their historical consciousness for their own self-understanding. Very often, sadly, this is not case, Makransky observes,

For example, many of the most learned Asian Mahāyāna teachers continue to speak as if the historical Buddha personally taught the Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures, in spite of much evidence to the contrary ...and to do this is to deny the historical evidence...”

(Jackson & Makransky, op cit)

Such notions fit in snugly with my own understanding of Buddhism today as “a family of Buddha-inspired religions,” each member with their own memory of the father and their own way of enjoying their spiritual inheritance. No sibling in such a family should pontificate that his or her memory of the teacher is the only right one, or that the inheritance should be used in only their prescribed way.

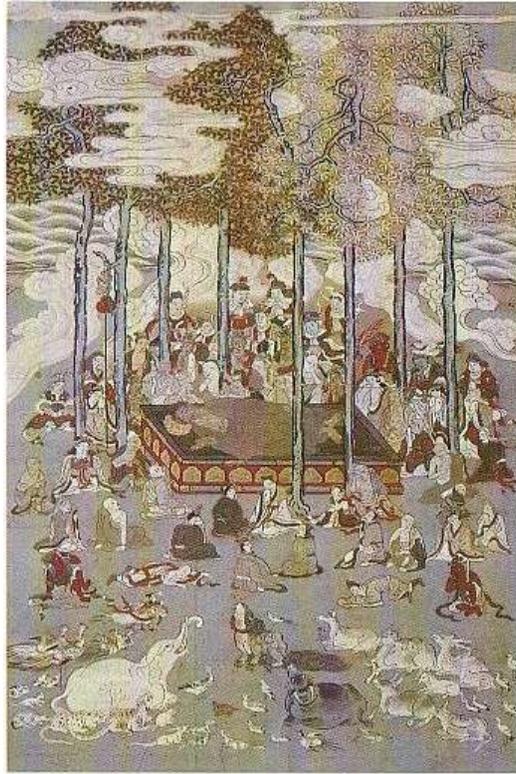
5.4 The “one way,” then, is not a Procrustean bed of fitting fellows, but a partnership of pilgrims humbly walking towards the same goal, that is, the “one way” of spiritual transformation.

We should therefore get out of the habit of inserting our own current systematic perspective into Śākyamuni Buddha’s mouth in the mistaken attempt to force such conformity.

Such has been the repeated misuse of our reverence for Śākyamuni Buddha. Accomplished members of practice communities in all Buddhist cultures past and present are the actual source of our wisdom through history, yet each of our traditions has repeatedly submerged or erased many of their voices, voices of the trans-historical Buddha, for ahistorical reconstructions of Śākyamuni that support our own exclusive understanding of the moment. (Makransky,2000: 19)

In other words, there is so much we can use from the wealth of our past and present, from our innumerable teachers, and even from past and present of other faiths so that we have a better understanding of our own until the moment of our own spiritual awakening. With the Buddha’s passing, the Dharma and Vinaya become the veritable transhistorical Buddha, the living teacher in our presence even as we keep to the Dharma and Vinaya. Why limit the Buddha’s presence to curious relics, stony stupas and silent images when we can find his liberating “presence” in the all into which we look deeply enough? “He who sees the Dharma, sees me; he who sees me, sees the Dharma” (S 22.87,13/3:120).⁹⁴⁷

⁹⁴⁷ What is meant here is not some kind of pantheistic immanence of the Buddha, but our vision into the true nature of reality (*yathā,bhūta*) where “seeing is not by the eye but by insight” (DhsA 350). In this connection, see **Vakkali S** (S 22.-87/3:119 -124) & **Vakkali-t,thera Vatthu** (DhA 25.11/4:118 f), both in SD 8.8.



Japanese depiction of the Great Parinirvana

Bibliography

For other abbreviations and details, see **Textual Conventions in any of *Sutta Discovery* vols 1-4.**

A	=	Aṅguttara Nikāya (see Primary Sources).
D	=	Dīgha Nikāya (see Primary Sources).
Divy	=	Divyāvadāna (see Primary Sources).
EB:B	=	<i>Encyclopaedia of Buddhism</i> , 2 vols, ed Robert Buswell, 2003.
M	=	Majjhima Nikāya (see Primary Sources).
MPS	=	Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta or Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūtra [only in this study].
PEGBTT	=	<i>A Pali-English Glossary of Buddhist Technical Terms</i> by Ñāṇamoli (qv).
S	=	Saṃyutta Nikāya (see Primary Sources).
T	=	Taishō Shinshū Daizokiyō. Tokyo: Daizo Shuppan Co, 1924-34.
V	=	Vinaya (Piṭaka) (see Primary Sources).

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[References are usually to *volume:page* of the Pali text (eg S 3:79 or SN III 79). These are given in the translation at the top of the left hand page, but exact Pali page-breaks are not indicated within the text of the translation. The most useful reference, however, is: sutta no. (section.) verse / vol:page, eg M 35.5/1:229. For details, see Textual Conventions in any of *Sutta Discovery* vols 1-4.]

A **Aṅguttara Nikāya**

- A:WH **The Book of Gradual Sayings** (A:WH), tr FL Woodward & E.M. Hare, Oxford: OUP, 1932-36. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the beginner.]
- A:ÑB **Numerical Discourses of the Buddha (Anthology)** (A:ÑB), tr Nyanaponika Thera & Bhikkhu Bodhi. Walnut Creek: Altamira & Kandy: BPS, 1999. (208 selected suttas.)
- A:P **Living Word of the Buddha**, current tr project by Piya Tan, The Minding Centre, Singapore, Feb 2002 onwards. See <http://dharmafarer.org>.

D **Dīgha Nikāya**

- D:RD **Dialogues of the Buddha**, tr TW & CAF Rhys Davids, London: PTS, 1899-1921. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the beginner.]
- D:W **The Long Discourses of the Buddha**, tr Maurice Walshe. Boston: Wisdom & Kandy: BPS, 1995.
- D:P **Living Word of the Buddha**, current tr project by Piya Tan, The Minding Centre, Singapore, Feb 2002 onwards. See <http://dharmafarer.org>.

M **Majjhima Nikāya**

- M:H **Middle Length Sayings** (M:H), tr I.B. Horner, London: PTS, 1954, 1957, 1959. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the beginner.]
- M:ÑB **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha** (M:ÑB), tr Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli & Bhikkhu Bodhi, Boston: Wisdom & Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, 1995; 2nd ed 2001.
- M:P **Living Word of the Buddha**, current tr project by Piya Tan, The Minding Centre, Singapore, Feb 2002 onwards. See <http://dharmafarer.org>.

S **Saṃyutta Nikāya**

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- S:B **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha**, tr Bhikkhu Bodhi, Boston: Wisdom, 2000. 2 vols.
- S:P **Living Word of the Buddha**, current tr project by Piya Tan, The Minding Centre, Singapore, Feb 2002 onwards. See <http://dharmafarer.org>.

V **Vinaya**

- V:H **The Book of the Discipline**. References are usually to *volume:page* of the Pali text. Tr IB Horner. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1952. See “The Lesser Division (Cullavagga) XI,” V:H 5:393-406. [Useful only in its critical structure; its English translation is very unreliable; hence not recommended for the

beginner.]

V:RDO **Vinaya Texts**. *The Sacred Books of the East*. Vol 8. Tr TW Rhys Davids & Herman Oldenberg, 1881-85.

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